



The Colorado Statewide Homeless Count

Homeless People Count...

Homeless Families Count...

Homeless Children Count...

Homeless Veterans Count...



COLORADO STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNT SUMMER, 2006

FINAL REPORT

February 2007

COLORADO STATEWIDE POINT-IN-TIME KEY FINDINGS

- ➔ *An estimated **16,203 people*** were homeless in Colorado on Monday night, August 28, 2006. This includes point-in-time survey respondents, family members who are homeless with them, domestic violence shelter data, counts and estimates of the unsheltered homeless, and estimated relatives not identified by respondents.
- ➔ ***Surveys typically undercount the homeless.*** The literature indicates that youth, recently homeless persons, rural homeless, unsheltered homeless, and persons who are doubled-up with family and friends or “couch surfing” are less likely to be counted.
- ➔ The state conducted the survey over a 24-hour period to maximize agency participation and to reduce the number of duplicate surveys. This methodology successfully ***reduced the incidence of duplication.***
- ➔ ***Minorities make up a larger percentage of the homeless population relative to Colorado’s general population.***
- ➔ The data strongly suggest that the majority of the 1,577 respondents (and their families) who were classified as ***“not homeless”*** are living on the edge of homelessness.
- ➔ Many of Colorado’s homeless are ***children and families.***
 - ***Children and teens*** comprise one-third of Colorado’s homeless.
 - More than six in 10 homeless persons is part of a ***household with children.***
 - One-quarter of all ***unsheltered homeless*** are families with children.
 - Most ***newly homeless*** households are comprised of women and children.
- ➔ There are dramatic differences in where people in households with and without children ***spent Monday night.*** More families with children stayed in transitional housing or temporarily with family or friends, while more people without children stayed in emergency shelters or slept on the street.
- ➔ Half of all respondents have at least one serious, ***disabling condition: serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS.***
- ➔ The most common ***reasons for homelessness*** are housing-related costs, loss of job, and having one or more serious, disabling condition.
- ➔ Nearly two-thirds of respondents said that they or another family member needed at least one service that they could not obtain. The most frequently ***needed service*** is permanent housing.
- ➔ Men and households without children have experienced more ***episodes of homelessness*** in the last three years, and are more likely to have been homeless five or more times.
- ➔ Nearly one in ten are ***chronically homeless***; the great majority are male.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *Colorado Statewide Homeless Count, August 2006* is the result of a collaborative effort between the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Housing (CDH), Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), Colorado Department of Human Services, Fannie Mae Foundation, Daniels Fund and the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH). More than 450 agencies, churches, non-profit organizations, and corporate and community volunteers from throughout the state helped conduct the count. Without their support, this study would not have been possible.

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Finally, this report would not have been possible without the cooperation of the survey respondents. The results of the count provide all of us with a more complete understanding of homelessness to better plan housing and services.

This report may be found on the
Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness website at:
www.colorado.gov/cich/ or, www.dola.state.co.us/housing/publications/

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COLORADO STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNT SUMMER, 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

"If there is more than one who does not wish to be out in the wilderness or stuck in a shelter, and we can change this equation, then the number is too great a burden on our consciousness."¹

*On Monday night, August 28, 2006, there were an estimated **16,203** homeless men, women, and children in Colorado.*²

On the evening of August 28, 2006, the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH), along with hundreds of volunteers from Colorado counties, conducted a "point-in-time" study of homeless persons in Colorado, the first such study in over fifteen years. CICH defines homelessness as follows:

An individual is considered homeless if he or she is:

- Sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, or abandoned or condemned buildings;
- Sleeping in an emergency shelter;
- Spending a short time (30 consecutive days or less) in a hospital or other institution, but ordinarily sleeping in the types of places mentioned above;
- Living in transitional/supportive housing but having come from streets or emergency shelters;
- Staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for a permanent place to live;
- Staying temporarily in a hotel/motel paid for by others/vouchers and/or while looking for shelter or housing;
- Being evicted within a week from a private dwelling unit and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing; or
- Being discharged from an institution and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing.

Homelessness is a traumatic and terrifying experience. Many families are unable to stay together; homeless persons often have serious health problems directly related to their lack of housing; and children suffer long-term effects on their physical and emotional health including diminished educational performance and difficulties in school.

Homelessness not only affects the very poor, but also working and middle class individuals and families. Americans are homeless primarily because they cannot pay for housing and are increasingly unable to

¹ Thank you, Randle (Randle Loeb).

² Agencies from across the state submitted estimates of unsheltered homeless persons, that is, unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted. These estimates identify a total 1,218 homeless persons. Combined with all the surveyed homeless, the domestic violence aggregate data and the number of unsheltered homeless who were counted but not surveyed, an estimated **17,421** people were homeless on August 28, 2006.

afford to buy or even rent their homes. They face the national trends of low wages, declining public assistance programs, and limited affordable housing.

It is impossible to know the precise number of people who are homeless. In the words of a formerly homeless person, now a tireless homeless advocate, "If there is more than one who does not wish to be out in the wilderness or stuck in a shelter, and we can change this equation, then the number is too great a burden on our consciousness."³

ESTIMATING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS PERSONS IN COLORADO

There is considerable literature on methods for estimating the total number of homeless persons from point-in-time data. Some of these studies have used extremely complicated and sophisticated methodologies to estimate the total number of homeless. The survey questions and the overall methodology for this study were the consequence of a number of considerations. These primary factors included the following:

- To the extent possible, collect data consistent with previous local point-in-time surveys for comparison purposes.
- Limit the survey to a one, two-sided page in order to facilitate survey distribution and administration, and eliminate the possibility that any pages of a survey could be lost.
- Use an extensive system of trained agency staff and volunteers to collect data to make the experience comfortable for homeless persons and to keep the cost of the survey affordable.

TOTAL HOMELESS STATEWIDE

On Monday night, August 28, 2006, an estimated **16,203** people were homeless in Colorado.

KEY FINDINGS: Table A. TOTAL HOMELESS – STATEWIDE	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	6,665
Relatives	5,225
Total All Survey Homeless	11,890
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER DATA	
Respondents	159
Children	170
Other Family Members	5
Total Domestic Violence	334
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	2,981
SURVEY ESTIMATE	
Additional relatives not fully identified by respondents	998
TOTAL	16,203

³ Thank you, Randle.

The one consistent finding in all the research on homelessness is that surveys undercount the homeless. It is particularly difficult to count those homeless persons who are unsheltered.⁴ The total number of homeless individuals fluctuates over time. People who are homeless typically move in and out of homelessness as conditions in their life change. Data collected during one day of the year only represents a snapshot of homelessness on that day.

- Service use differs by community — in some communities, substantial proportions of the homeless, including homeless street persons, are service users; in other communities, they are not. Homeless persons are most likely to seek services from persons and agencies that specialize in helping the homeless.⁵
- Some groups may be underrepresented among service users, including youth, recently homeless persons, and persons who are doubled up with friends and family.⁶
- Many homeless persons hide themselves from public view and are living in places where they are not easily found, such as vehicles, tents, boxes, caves or boxcars.
- The homeless population is often underestimated in rural areas and other locations where there are few or no homeless services.⁷

NATIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT

In the United States, approximately 3.5 million people, 1.35 million of them children, are likely to experience homelessness in a given year.⁸ The number of homeless families with children has increased significantly over the past 10 years, and is one of the fastest growing segments of homeless persons.

The primary causes of homelessness include poverty, the growing shortage of affordable housing, domestic violence, the cost of health insurance, mental health problems, and substance abuse. Homelessness is often thought of as an urban issue; however, many people experience homelessness in small towns and rural locations.

According to recent U.S. Census data,⁹ Colorado's poverty rate has risen steadily since the late 1990s. Some services are available to help low-income families remain housed, but these programs do not begin to meet the demand.

⁴ For example, "Number of Homeless Ohioans," Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, 8/27/02; : "Report on Homelessness in North Dakota, March 2005" (p. 15); S.J. Farrell and E.D. Reissing, "Picking Up the Challenge: Developing a Methodology to Enumerate and Assess the Needs of the Street Homeless Population, Evaluation Review, Vol. 28, No. 2, April 2004, pp. 144-155.

⁵ Franklin J. James. (1991). "Counting Homeless Persons with Surveys of Users of Services for the Homeless," *Housing Policy Debate*, Volume 2, Issue 3, pp. 733-753.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Urban Institute. "America's Homeless II: Populations and Services." February 1, 2000.

⁸ National Coalition for the Homeless. "How Many People Experience Homeless? NCH Fact Sheet #2." National Coalition for the Homeless. June 2006. <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/How_Many.pdf>

⁹ *The Denver Post*. "Poor Numbers on Poverty." August 30, 2006.; *The Rocky Mountain News*. "Colorado Incomes on the Decline." August 30, 2006.

II. ORGANIZATIONS/PEOPLE

The Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH) initiated Colorado's August 2006 homeless count, which was primarily led by the Colorado Division of Housing (CDH). The project included active participation and collaboration from numerous agencies, organizations, and individuals, including the Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA); Colorado Coalition for the Homeless; Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs; the Colorado Department of Human Services; Adams County Housing Authority; Volunteers of America; Posada; Fannie Mae; Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative; United Way; Rocky Mountain Housing Development Corporation; and homeless advocates. Individuals from these organizations formed the Housing Subcommittee Group for the Statewide Count (Housing Subcommittee). CHFA, CDH, the Daniels Fund, and Fannie Mae funded the project, and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless agreed to serve as the fiscal agent.

The Colorado Statewide Homeless Count required a phenomenal amount of collaboration. Throughout every phase of the project, participants exhibited consistent patience, dedication and skill in resolving issues and reconciling differing opinions. Coordination of agencies and volunteers occurred primarily at the county and local level, through regional and county coordinators. All but three Colorado counties participated in the statewide point-in-time survey and count.¹⁰ Hundreds of agencies participated in collecting data and distributing the survey. Agency staff and volunteers from government programs, non-profit organizations, supportive service and food distribution programs, meal sites and faith-based organizations literally worked thousands of hours to help organize the count in their area, recruit volunteers, and disseminate and collect surveys, among many other tasks.

The Housing Subcommittee contracted with the Center for Education Policy Analysis/Center for Public-Private Sector Cooperation (CEPA/CPPSC), Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, and the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC). CEPA/CPPSC's primary role was to develop the point in time methodology, analyze data, and write a comprehensive final report. NRC primarily served as the statewide project coordinator and principle trainer.

The Housing Subcommittee conducted the planning and communications of the count as a *campaign*. The Subcommittee created a logo, developed an extensive website, recruited a spokesperson, provided a media kit, and consistently communicated with key stakeholders statewide via email, telephone, phone conferencing, video conferencing, fax, website, and post.

The following information provides a picture of the men, women and children, veterans, disabled, and all of those homeless individuals and families that dedicated volunteers and service providers were able to survey on August 28 and 29, 2006.

¹⁰ Twelve counties did not submit any surveys but did submit tracking forms, indicating that they tried to participate but did not serve any homeless clients during the relevant time. Of these 12 counties, one submitted a homeless count.

III. THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

The statewide survey findings report on the respondents who completed the survey and their relatives who also were without a permanent place to live. The researchers refer to the sum of respondents and relatives as “all survey homeless.” Most survey variables are reported only for respondents. A small number of variables can be extrapolated to the homeless relatives that respondents identified as with them.

SURVEY DATA

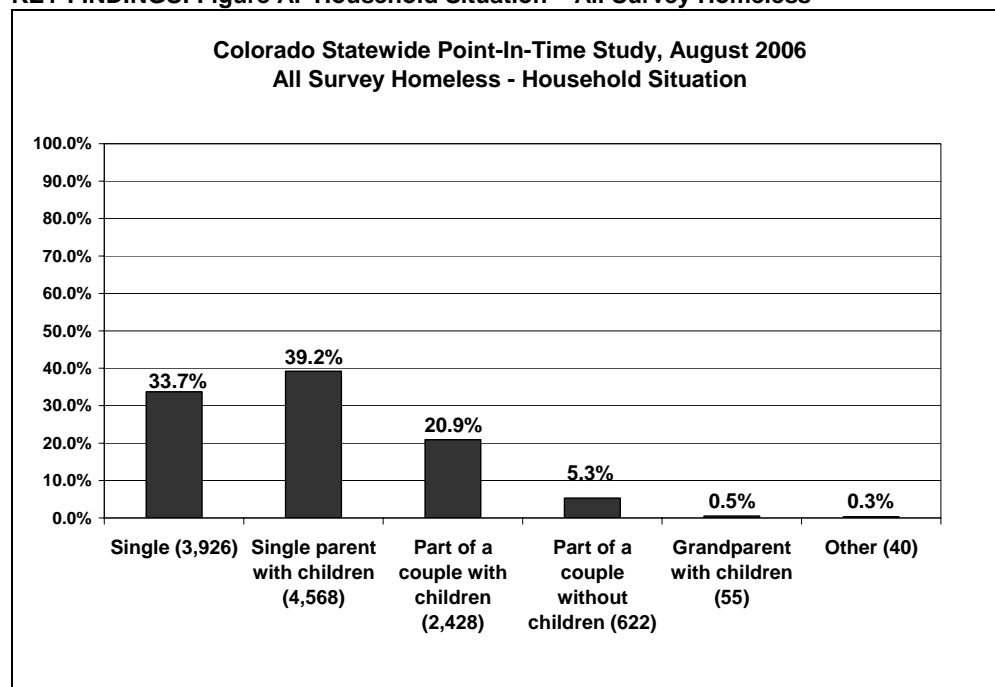
Survey respondents did not complete every question; because of these missing data, the numbers and percentages in the report do not always equal the number of respondents or all survey homeless. The percentages do not represent the total number of respondents, that is, the percentages do not include missing responses.¹¹

Statewide Survey Data

Household Situation – All Survey Homeless

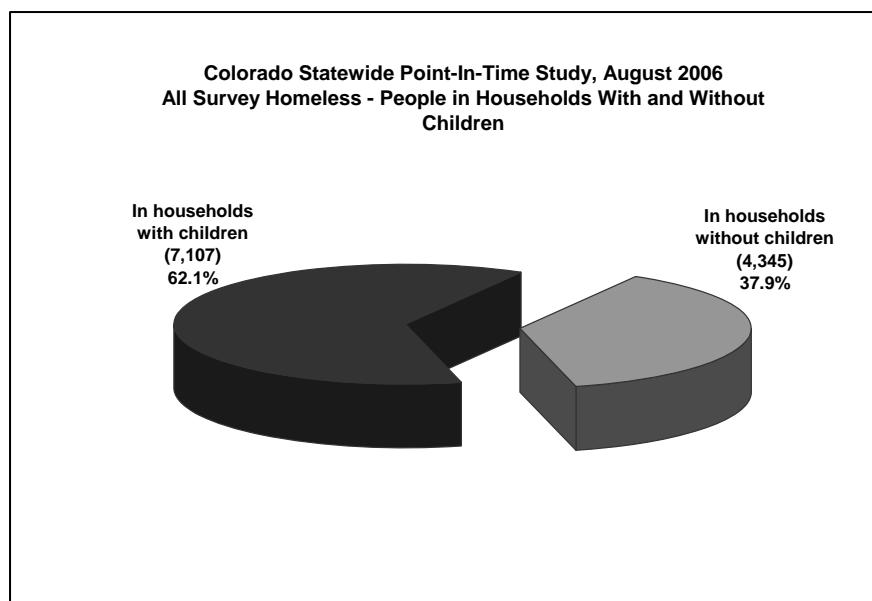
People in households headed by a single parent accounted for the largest group (39.2%) of all homeless people, followed by single individuals (33.7%).

KEY FINDINGS: Figure A. Household Situation – All Survey Homeless



¹¹ The exception is that, for questions where respondents could check “all that apply,” the percentage giving each response is based on all respondents.

KEY FINDINGS: FIGURE B. Households With/Without Children – All Survey Homeless



Nearly two-thirds (62.1%) of all homeless persons in Colorado are in households with children.

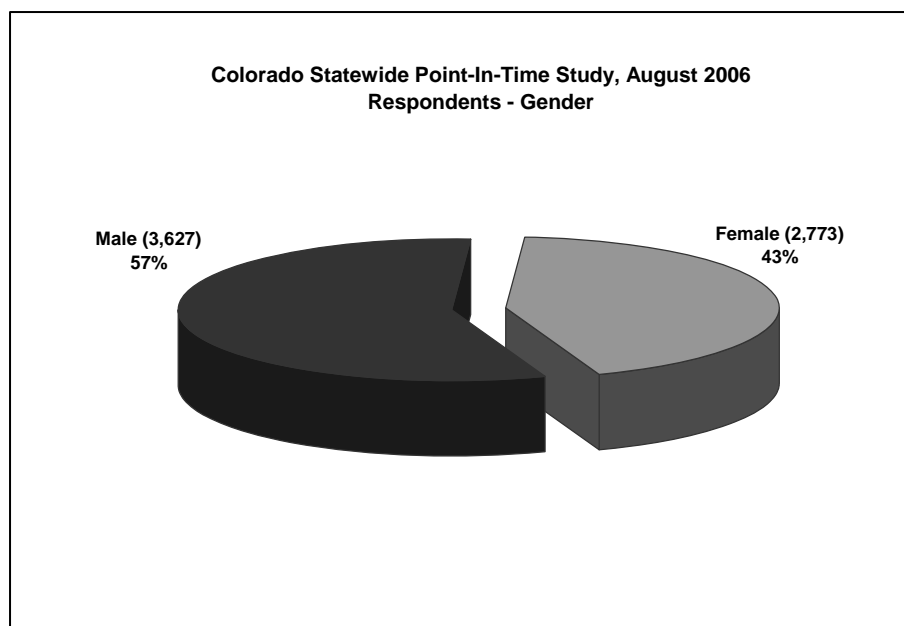
Ages – All Survey Homeless

Homeless persons ranged in age from less than one year to 98 years old. Half (51.2%) of all homeless persons were adults age 25-64. There were a total of 3,643 homeless children and teens; they comprised one-third (34.0%) of all people who were homeless on Monday night, August 28, 2006.

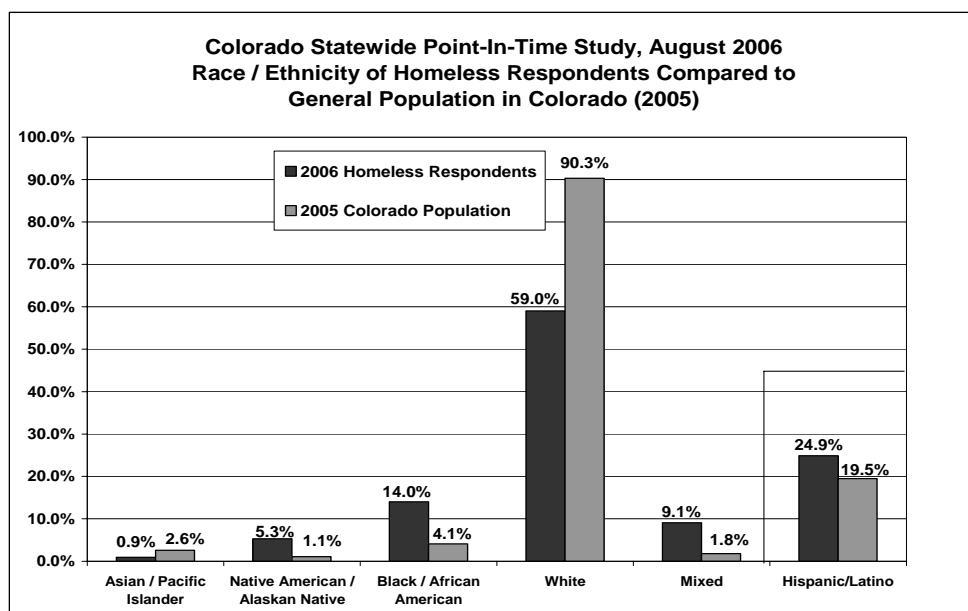
Gender – Respondents

Almost six in 10 (56.7%) respondents were male. Single individuals were predominantly male, while most single parent households were headed by females.

KEY FINDINGS: Figure C. Household Situation by Gender - Respondents



KEY FINDINGS: Figure D. Race/Ethnicity – Respondents¹²



Race/Ethnicity – Respondents

Compared to the general population in Colorado in 2005, minorities were over-represented and whites were under-represented among Colorado's homeless.

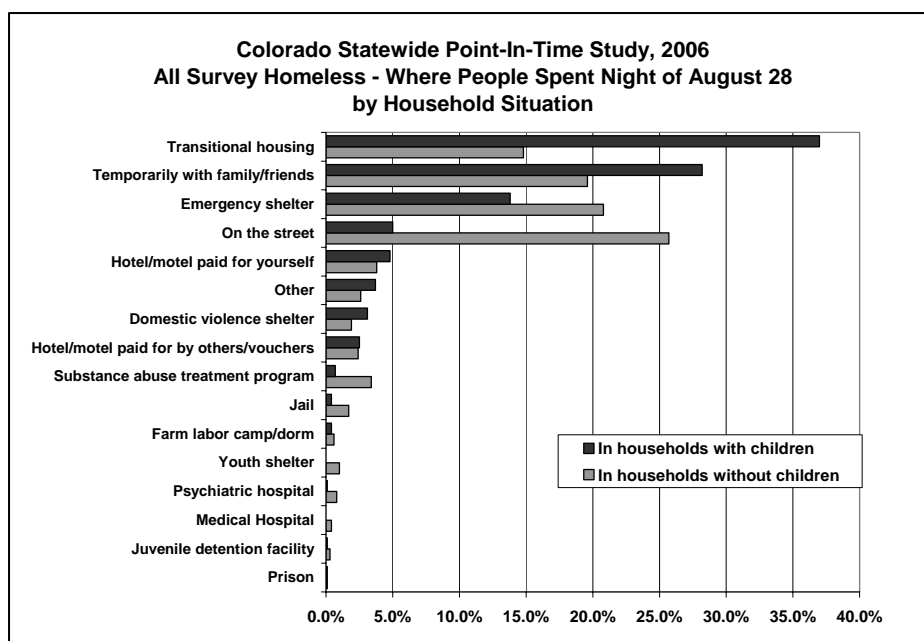
Monday Night, August 28, 2006 – All Survey Homeless

The majority of all homeless people in Colorado spent Monday night in transitional housing (28.0%), staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for shelter (24.4%), or in an emergency shelter (16.6%). Many more people in households with children stayed in transitional housing and with family and friends, while many more people in households without children slept on the street and stayed in an emergency shelter. (Figure F)

KEY FINDINGS: Figure E. Type of Place, Monday Night – All Survey Homeless

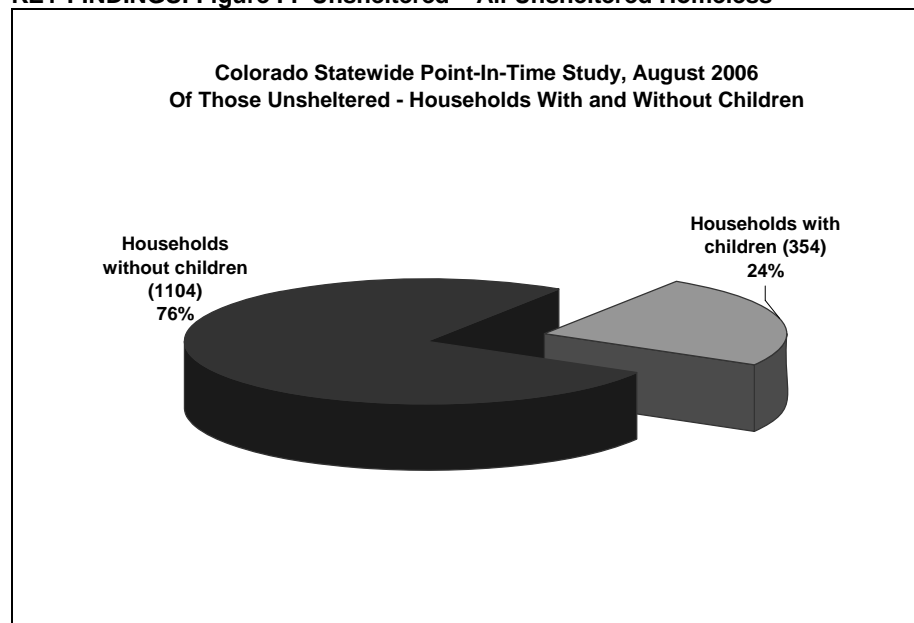
Unsheltered Homeless – All Survey Homeless

Thirteen percent (13.2%) of all survey homeless were unsheltered. Of the unsheltered homeless, one-quarter (24.3%) were people in families with children.



¹² Race and ethnicity were asked in separate questions. Race does not add to 100 percent because 11.6% of respondents described their race as "other."

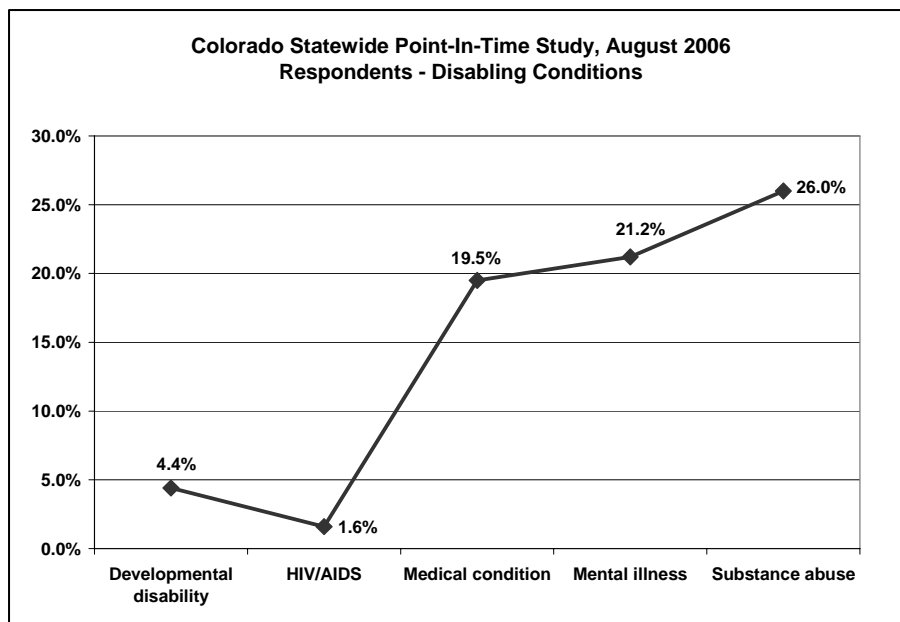
KEY FINDINGS: Figure F. Unsheltered – All Unsheltered Homeless



KEY FINDINGS: Figure G. Disabling Conditions - Respondents

Disabling Conditions - Respondents

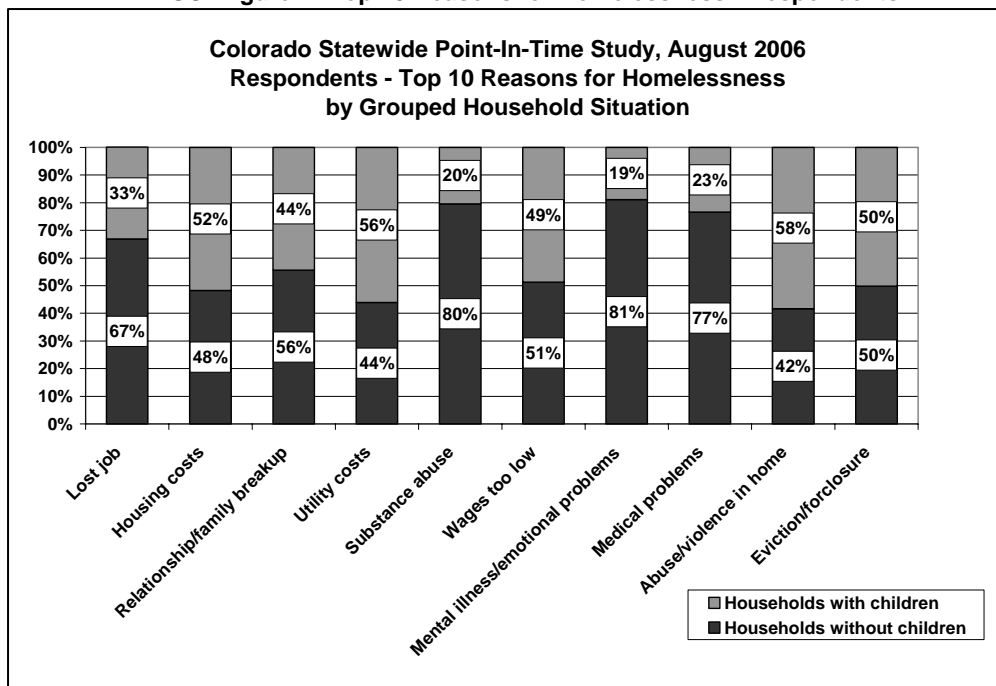
Half of all respondents (50.9%) had at least one of the following disabling conditions – serious mental illness, a serious medical condition, chronic substance abuse problems, a developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. One in four (26.0%) had a chronic substance abuse issue, and approximately one in five had a serious mental illness (21.2%) or a serious medical condition (19.5%).



Reasons for Homelessness - Respondents

The most commonly cited reasons for homelessness were loss of job and housing costs, followed by family/relationship breakup and utility costs. Slightly more than half (53%) of the reported reasons related to the cost of housing (housing costs, utility costs and eviction/foreclosure), and forty percent (40.9%) related to the existence of serious conditions (substance abuse, mental illness, and medical problems).

KEY FINDINGS: Figure H. Top 10 Reasons for Homelessness - Respondents

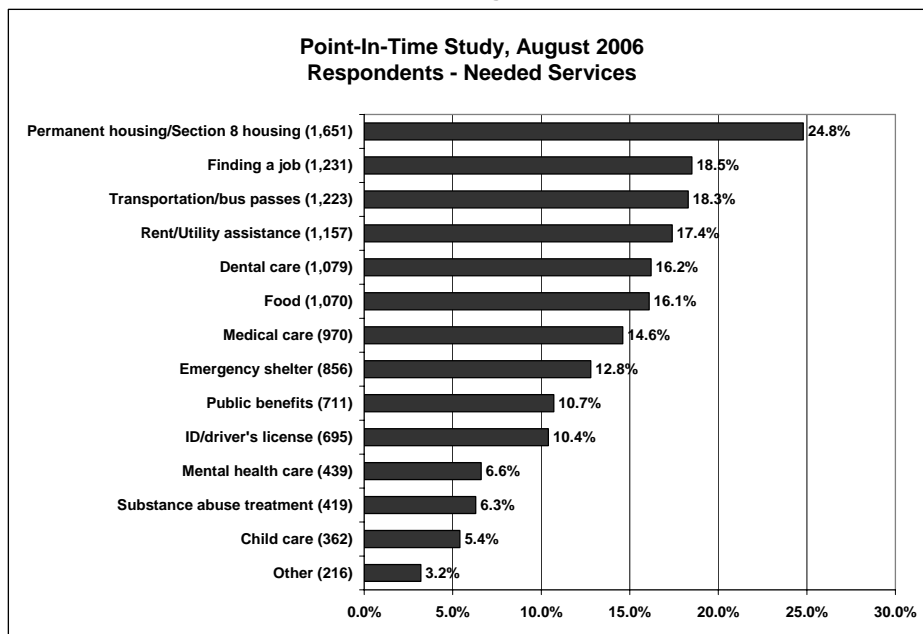


Respondents in households with children were more likely to cite abuse or violence in the home as a cause of their homelessness. Those in households without children were much more likely to report substance, mental illness, and medical problems as a reason for their current homelessness.

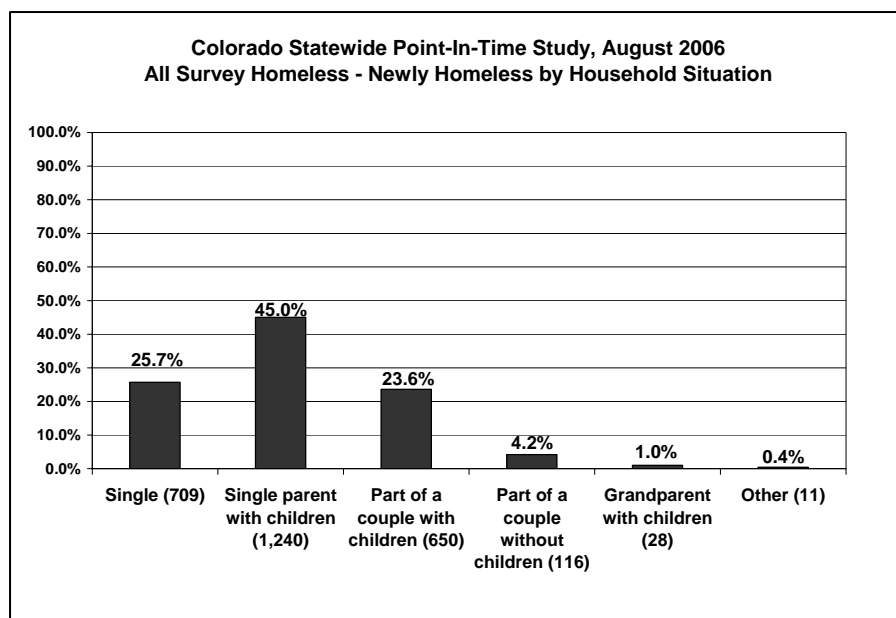
KEY FINDINGS: Figure I. Needed Services – Respondents

Services - Respondents

Nearly two-thirds (63.2%) of respondents reported that, in the past month, they or another family member needed at least one service they could not obtain. The most frequently needed service was permanent housing, cited by one-quarter (24.8%) of respondents. Other frequently needed services were help finding a job, transportation, and rent and/or utility assistance.



KEY FINDINGS: Figure J. Newly Homeless – All Survey Homeless



Newly Homeless – All Survey Homeless

Twenty percent (21.5%) of all survey homeless were newly homeless. Nearly three-quarters (70.8%) of the newly homeless were in households with children. Single parents comprised almost half (45.0%) of the newly homeless.

Since females head most single parent households, most newly homeless families were comprised of women and children.

Duration and Episodes of Homelessness – Respondents

Duration: Almost half of respondents (45.8%) who were homeless on Monday night had been without a permanent place to live for more than one month but less than one year. Sixteen percent (15.9%) had been homeless for less than a month, and 11% (10.6%) had been homeless for more than three years.

Episodes: One-third (32.4%) of respondents reported that they were experiencing their first episode of homelessness in the last three years on the night of August 28. Almost one in five (18.3%) had been homeless five or more times in the last three years. Men and respondents in households without children experienced more episodes of homelessness in the last three years.

KEY FINDINGS: Figure K. Chronically Homelessness - Respondents

Chronically Homeless - Respondents

On the night of August 28, 2006, almost 10 percent (9.2%), or 610 respondents, were chronically homeless; the great majority of the 610 chronically homeless persons (86.4%) were male.

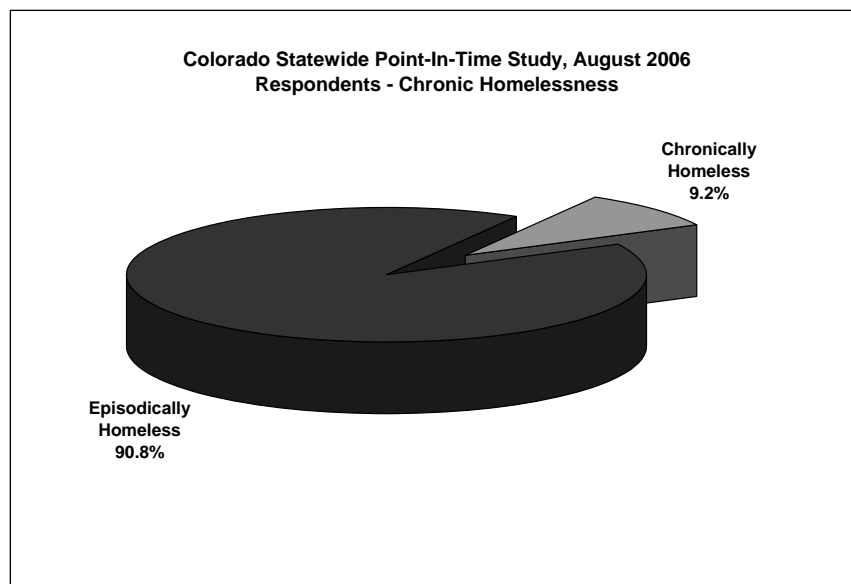


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PART I. INTRODUCTION

"If there is more than one who does not wish to be out in the wilderness or stuck in a shelter, and we can change this equation, then the number is too great a burden on our consciousness."

On Monday night, August 28, 2006, there were an estimated **16,203** homeless men, women, and children in Colorado.

COLORADO STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNT, AUGUST 2006

On the evening of August 28, 2006, the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH),¹ along with hundreds of volunteers from all 64 Colorado counties, conducted the *Colorado Statewide Homeless Count, August 2006*, "a point-in-time" study of homeless persons in Colorado, the first such study in over fifteen years.² CICH defines homelessness as follows:

An individual is considered homeless if he or she is:

- Sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, or abandoned or condemned buildings;
- Sleeping in an emergency shelter;
- Spending a short time (30 consecutive days or less) in a hospital or other institution, but ordinarily sleeping in the types of places mentioned above;
- Living in transitional/supportive housing but having come from streets or emergency shelters;
- Staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for a permanent place to live;
- Staying temporarily in a hotel/motel paid for by others/vouchers and/or while looking for shelter or housing;
- Being evicted within a week from a private dwelling unit and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing; or,
- Being discharged from an institution and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing.

A point-in-time count provides a snapshot of homelessness by counting those who are homeless at a particular time. However, surveyors can easily "miss" the homeless. People enter and leave homelessness frequently and may only become homeless the day after the point-in-time study. Some homeless people may not be in places where they are easily counted, such as transitional housing or homeless shelters. Many of Colorado's homeless persons are in remote rural areas. Some homeless persons are doubling up temporarily with family or friends and are not accessing services. Others are homeless due to domestic violence and, because of confidentiality concerns, did not complete surveys. Still other homeless people,

¹ CICH is a collaboration of State, Federal, nonprofit agencies, and businesses, created to help homeless families and individuals achieve housing stability and to overcome the problems associated with homelessness.

² Franklin J. James. (1991). "Counting Homeless Persons with Surveys of Users of Services for the Homeless," *Housing Policy Debate*, Volume 2, Issue 3, pp. 733-753.

such as undocumented persons, may not want to be counted. Many homeless are not counted because they are not in places where they can be found, much less where they have the opportunity to complete a survey, such as those living in automobiles and other kinds of crude and temporary housing.

On the night of Monday, August 28, 2006, as soon as shelters closed their doors for the night the survey process was instructed to begin. Unsheltered street surveys, counts and/or estimates also started on Monday night. Agencies offering day services began their participation at the start of business on Tuesday, August 29, 2006, and continued until the close of business on that day. The survey data were collected primarily on the night of Monday, August 28 and Tuesday, August 29, referencing the point-in-time as the night of Monday, August 28. Agencies that were not open on Monday night or Tuesday day collected data on the first day of the week that they served clients. Agency staff and volunteers attempted to survey every homeless individual or, in the case of family groups and couples, one adult family member in all of the identified locations.

ESTIMATING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS PERSONS IN COLORADO

There is considerable literature on methods for estimating the total number of homeless persons from point-in-time data. Some of these studies have used extremely complicated and sophisticated methodologies to estimate the total number of homeless. The survey questions and the overall methodology for this study were the consequence of a number of considerations, including:

- To the extent possible, collect data consistent with previous local point-in-time surveys for comparison purposes.
- Limit the survey to one, two-sided page in order to facilitate survey distribution and administration, and eliminate the possibility that any pages of a survey could be lost.
- Use an extensive system of trained agency staff and volunteers to collect data to make the experience comfortable for homeless persons and to keep the cost of the survey affordable.

The researchers are confident that the survey and count provide the best estimate possible, given these considerations, of the number and characteristics of the homeless in Colorado on August 28, 2006. However, the procedure was not designed to produce a statistically sound estimate of all homeless persons in the state.

Researchers conducting the summer, 2006 statewide homeless count developed a relatively simple process for trying to determine the true number of homeless in each location. Researchers designed a tracking form and asked each agency and volunteer who returned completed surveys, and/or who did a count of unsheltered homeless, to provide the following information for each location:

- Number of completed surveys
- Number of unsheltered homeless counted
- Number of unsheltered homeless estimated
- For agencies, their best estimate of the number of unduplicated clients served at that location in a typical week in August, 2006

- If counted or estimated number of unsheltered homeless, their best estimate of the number of unduplicated homeless clients who stay at that location in a typical week in August, 2006

The purpose of this information was to have a way to (1) assess the accuracy and completeness of the homeless surveys and unsheltered counts, (2) compare the weekly homeless estimates to the actual data that were provided, and (3) use this information to calculate total homeless persons.

A detailed description of the survey design methodology is presented in Part VII.

TOTAL HOMELESS STATEWIDE

Based on the Point-In-Time survey and the associated counts and estimates, the researchers estimate that there are **16,203** homeless men, women, and children in Colorado.³ Table 1 provides the total number of homeless persons in Colorado, as well as the separate components that combine to create the total count.

KEY FINDINGS: Table 1. TOTAL HOMELESS – STATEWIDE	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	6,665
Relatives	5,225
Total All Survey Homeless	11,890
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER DATA	
Respondents	159
Children	170
Other Family Members	5
Total Domestic Violence	334
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	2,981
SURVEY ESTIMATE⁴	
Additional relatives not fully identified by respondents	998
TOTAL	16,203

³ Agencies from across the state submitted estimates of unsheltered homeless persons, that is, unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted. These estimates identify a total 1,218 homeless persons. Combined with all the surveyed homeless, the domestic violence aggregate data and the number of unsheltered homeless who were counted but not surveyed, an estimated **17,421** people were homeless on August 28, 2006.

⁴ Refer to Table 30. A number of respondents who identified themselves as having children or a spouse did not document those family members when completing their survey. The researchers computed an estimate of the number of unidentified relatives based on the average number of identified relatives for each household situation.

NATIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT

In the United States, approximately 3.5 million people, 1.35 million of them children, are likely to experience homelessness in a given year.⁵ Homeless people do not fit one general description. Based on a survey of 27 cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors reported characteristics of the homeless⁶:

- *41% are single men*
- *14% are single women*
- *5% are unaccompanied youth*
- *40% are families with children*
- *23% are mentally disabled*
- *10% are veterans*
- *30% are drug/alcohol dependent*
- *35% are White*
- *65% are Minorities*

The number of homeless families with children has increased significantly over the past ten years, and is one of the fastest growing segments of homeless persons.

The primary causes of homelessness include poverty, the growing shortage of affordable housing, domestic violence, the cost of health insurance, mental health problems, and substance abuse.

- The growing shortage of affordable housing, together with an increase in poverty, is largely responsible for the rise in homelessness over the past 20-25 years.⁷ Many individuals without a permanent place to live have limited shelter options, and for homeless families, the percentage of denied shelter requests is even higher. In 2004, the U.S. Conference of Mayors reported that the demand for shelter climbed 14 percent.⁸
- Low wages and less secure jobs offering fewer benefits strengthen the disparity between rich and poor. Nationally, 44 percent of the homeless population is employed,⁹ and for these individuals and families, work is no escape from poverty.
- The declining value and availability of public assistance contributes to the increasing poverty rate and resulting homelessness. Earned income for those experiencing poverty has been decreasing as budgets have shrunk for assistance programs.¹⁰

⁵ National Coalition for the Homeless. "How Many People Experience Homeless? NCH Fact Sheet #2." National Coalition for the Homeless. June 2006. <<http://www.nationalhomeless.org>>

⁶ National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. Homelessness and Poverty in America. Overview. <<http://www.nlchp.org/FA%5FHAPIA/>>

⁷ National Coalition for the Homeless. "Why Are People Homeless? NCH Fact Sheet #1." National Coalition for the Homeless. June 2006. <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/How_Many.pdf>

⁸ National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. Homelessness and Poverty in America. Overview. <<http://www.nlchp.org/FA%5FHAPIA/>>

⁹ Martha R. Burt et al., The Urban Institute, Homelessness: Programs and the People they Serve: Technical Report 5-3 (Interagency Council on the Homeless, December 1999).

¹⁰ National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. Homelessness and Poverty in America. Overview. <http://www.nlchp.org/FA%5FHAPIA/>

Because persons living in poverty are most at risk of becoming homeless, those groups who are more likely to experience poverty (children, unaccompanied youth, minorities, the elderly, single parent families) are more likely to experience homelessness.

Homelessness is often thought of as an urban issue; however, many people experience homelessness in small towns and rural locations. Poverty and lack of affordable housing are often much more extreme in rural areas than in their neighboring urban communities. Many rural areas simply have few or no shelter options, despite significant levels of reported homelessness.¹¹

Although homeless persons do not fit neatly into pre-determined categories, they share common needs: affordable housing, decent and adequate wages, health care, protection from violence, and often, additional services such as mental health and/or substance abuse treatment.

Colorado's poverty rate has risen steadily since the late 1990s, according to recent U.S. Census data.¹² In 1998, Colorado's poverty rate was 8.5 percent; by 2005, the poverty rate had increased to 10.4 percent. The increase in interest rates (which has sent foreclosure rates in the state to an all-time high), the lack of both new and existing affordable housing, rising energy and fuel prices, high home/rent costs, and either flat or declining wages create severe cost burdens for many of Colorado's households. Some services are available to help low income families remain housed, such as the Housing Choice Voucher Program, (designed to help very low-income families afford housing) and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC) program (both designed to help low-income families pay their energy bills). However, programs such as these do not begin to meet demand. For example, EOC was able to assist only one in four eligible families in 2005. Thus, there is a disparity between the needs of Colorado's low-income individuals and families and the availability of assistance to help them maintain housing and prevent homelessness

The following report provides information about the men, women and children, veterans, disabled, and all of those homeless individuals and families that dedicated volunteers and service providers were able to survey on August 28 and 29, 2006 across the state of Colorado. CICH, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Continuums of Care, service providers, legislators, local governments, municipalities, and other organizations will use the information collected by the statewide point-in-time homeless count to assess, project, and plan strategies and services to eliminate homelessness.

We thank the dedicated groups and individuals who conducted this count in the midst of their ongoing work, and appreciate their efforts to break the cycle of homelessness and help homeless persons achieve and maintain a better quality of life.

¹¹ Rural Homeless Initiative. La Puente Home. "Rural Homeless Initiative: Fact Sheet."
<http://www.lapuente.net/ruralinitiative.htm>.

¹² *The Denver Post*. "Poor Numbers on Poverty." August 30, 2006.; *The Rocky Mountain News*. "Colorado Incomes on the Decline." August 30, 2006.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

Part II provides information about the point-in-time survey process.

Part III presents statewide survey data. These data are reported for respondents (those individuals who completed the survey) and all survey homeless (both respondents and family members who were with them and also homeless). It describes respondent characteristics including age; gender; military service; race and ethnicity; seasonal work status; disability status; reasons for homelessness; duration and episodes of homelessness; chronic homelessness; government benefits; and needed services. It also profiles all survey homeless in terms of the place where they stayed Monday night; age of relatives and relationship to respondent; household situation; newly homeless; and unsheltered homeless.

Part IV provides information about homeless persons by Continuum of Care. These data are reported for homeless persons (both respondents and all survey homeless) for the three Continuums of Care. The *MDHI Continuum* encompasses the greater metro Denver area and includes Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson Counties. The *El Paso Continuum/Colorado Springs Continuum* encompasses El Paso County. The *Balance of State Continuum (BOS)* includes the remaining counties in the state, many of which are rural.

Part V provides data about homeless persons in the nine regions identified for the statewide homeless count. For a map of the regions, see p. 9. For a list of the counties within regions, see, Table 8.

Part VI provides a summary of the key statewide survey findings.

Part VII is a detailed explanation of the research methodology, including survey design, training of surveyors, implementation and coordination of the process, data collection, data cleaning, and data analysis.

Part VIII consists of appendices, including the survey.

PART II. THE ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLE BEHIND THE POINT-IN-TIME SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

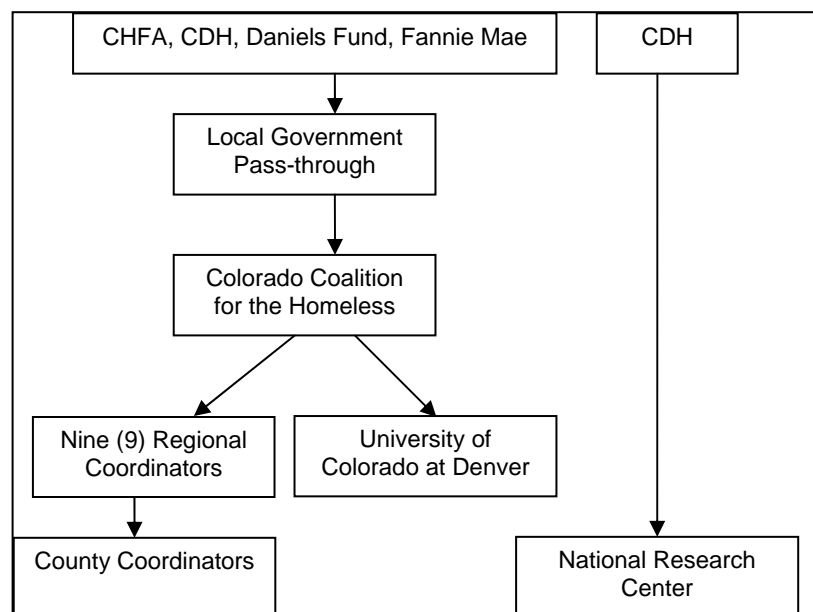
Colorado's August 2006 homeless count was initiated by the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH) and primarily led by the Colorado Division of Housing (CDH). The project included active participation and collaboration from numerous agencies, organizations, and individuals, including the Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA); Colorado Coalition for the Homeless; Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs, the Colorado Department of Human Services; Adams County Housing Authority; Volunteers of America; Posada; Fannie Mae; Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative; Mile High United Way; Rocky Mountain Housing Development Corporation, and homeless advocates. Individuals from these organizations formed the Housing Subcommittee Group for the Statewide Count (Housing Subcommittee).

CHFA, CDH, the Daniels Fund, and Fannie Mae funded the project, and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless agreed to serve as the fiscal agent. By January 2006, it was clear there were sufficient dollars, community interest and support for conducting the summer homeless count.

This section briefly identifies the organizational stakeholders in the survey process and describes the massive planning behind the organization and implementation of a statewide survey. (See Part VII for a more detailed description of the process).

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The complexity of the project and the number of funders and participating agencies presented enormous challenges. The following flowchart reflects both the organizational and funding structures.



The roles of each of these players is discussed more fully below.

PRELIMINARY WORK

At the start of the project, the Colorado Division of Housing developed a preliminary understanding of what homelessness looked like across the state, which helped clarify many organizational issues and informed the appropriate use of scarce resources. The challenge for the 2006 Colorado statewide homeless count was to guarantee statewide consistency in administering the count, and to obtain local commitment in the many communities across the state. CDH developed a preliminary map of homelessness in the various counties and regions, which served as the basis for identifying agencies serving various homeless populations.

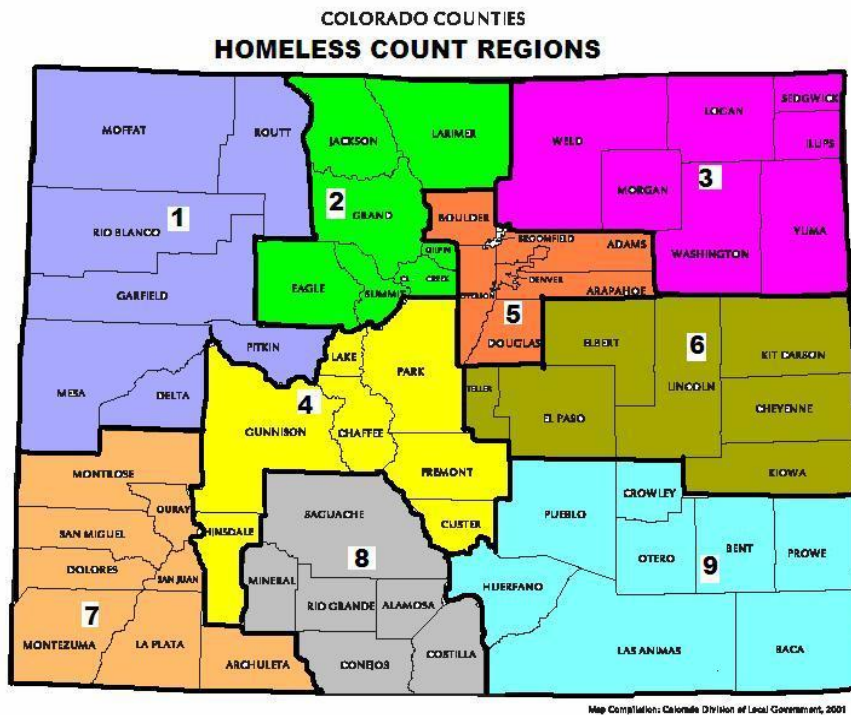
The Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH) sent a letter to hundreds of state and local organizations, informing them of the date and purpose of the homeless count and asking them for their assistance. These organizations included law enforcement, housing authorities, housing development organizations, homeless shelters, transitional housing, food banks and soup kitchens, treatment and rehabilitation facilities, health care organizations including mental health centers, prisons, National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management offices, departments of human and social services, health departments, county and municipal officials, faith-based organizations, family centers, domestic violence shelters, workforce centers, school districts, veterans groups, justice centers, migrant service agencies, United Way organizations, and Tribal organizations.

In May and June, 2006, prior to the homeless count, a web-based pre-survey was sent to rural agencies serving homeless individuals. The purpose of the survey was two-fold: 1) to gain information on the nature of homelessness in rural Colorado, and 2) to identify agencies and volunteers willing to help with the count. The pre-survey collected the following information:

- Identification of local agencies
- Identification of potential volunteers
- Estimates of the number of unsheltered homeless
- Locations where the unsheltered homeless stay at night

Using multiple lists and the responses to the pre-survey, CDH created a master list of agencies and sorted the list by county within each region. Coordinators also received a list of locations where unsheltered homeless stay at night, collected via the pre-survey.

Using geography, topography and communities of interest, the Housing Subcommittee subdivided the state into nine regions. The statewide homeless count process relied heavily on these regions throughout the point-in-time planning, coordination and survey administration process. The map helped participants visualize the state and emphasized areas that needed organizational help and attention (See Appendix 1 for a full-page regional map).



COLLABORATION

The Colorado Statewide Homeless Count required a phenomenal amount of collaboration. Throughout every phase of the project, participants exhibited consistent patience, dedication and skill in resolving issues and reconciling differing opinions. The primary planners at CDH are commended for their ceaseless commitment to the value of inclusion and to their leadership in providing a respectful environment for everyone involved. For example, in the early stages of the planning, the Housing Subcommittee began working with both urban and rural homeless service agencies in an effort to understand differences between urban and rural areas that affect homelessness, such as seasonality. Rural areas reported a higher incidence of homelessness in summer than winter, while urban areas have more homeless persons during the winter. Rural agencies requested a shorter survey form, while urban areas wanted the survey to be similar to the one that has been used in previous years in Metro Denver. Due to very different needs, perceptions, experiences, and expectations, it took nearly ten months to reach agreement on a draft survey.

Coordinators

CDH staff recruited nine regional and 64 county coordinators from human/social service agencies, housing authorities, homeless shelters, domestic violence agencies, county governments, and volunteers. The Housing Subcommittee also hired a statewide coordinator to manage the regional and county coordinators.

The dedicated group of regional and county coordinators were responsible for extensive organizing, planning and recruiting.

- Regional coordinators took the lead for their designated region of the state, coordinating all regional homeless count activities including educating agencies and the public regarding the homeless count. This included recruiting volunteers, providing training for volunteers and agency staff, and assisting the statewide coordinator with logistics of training and homeless count activities. The regional coordinators also helped coordinate the project's debriefing activities — evaluation and wrap-up of the survey process with the regional, county, and local community — and were responsible for submitting completed surveys to CDH. (See Appendix 2 for the Regional Coordinator Job Description).
- The county coordinators also contributed untold hours to the project through coordinating the recruitment of local survey field representatives in the county (agencies, nonprofits, departments of human services, housing authorities, law enforcement, and faith-based groups). These activities included identifying participating agencies, assisting with the planning and coordination for the county, assisting the regional coordinator with training logistics, coordinating with agencies to assess the need for survey administrators, and acting as a resource for necessary tasks on the day of the count. County coordinators also coordinated the actual survey process within the county to ensure consistency regarding handling of surveys during distribution and data collection. They submitted all completed surveys to the regional coordinators and assisted with debriefing activities. (See Appendix 3 for the County Coordinator Job Description).

Counties/Agencies/Volunteers

Coordination of agencies and volunteers occurred primarily at the county and local level. All but three Colorado counties participated in the statewide point-in-time survey and count.¹³ Hundreds of agencies participated in collecting data and distributing the survey. Agency staff and volunteers from government programs, non-profit organizations, supportive service and food distribution programs, meal sites and faith-based organizations literally worked thousands of hours to help organize the count in their area, recruit additional volunteers, and disseminate and collect surveys, among many other tasks.

CONSULTANTS

The Housing Subcommittee contracted with the Center for Education Policy Analysis / the Center for Public-Private Sector Cooperation (CEPA/CPPSC), Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, and the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC). CEPA/CPPSC's primary role was to develop the point-in-time methodology, analyze data, and write a comprehensive final report. NRC primarily served as the statewide project coordinator.

CEPA/CPPSC was instrumental in revising the survey instrument and developing the suggested data collection methodology, and in analyzing the data and producing the final report. In collaboration with NRC and volunteers, they conducted a pilot test of the revised survey.

¹³ Twelve counties did not submit any surveys but did submit tracking forms, indicating that they tried to participate but did not serve any homeless clients during the relevant time. Of these 12 counties, one submitted a homeless count.

CEPA/CPPSC and NRC developed a tracking form to document information about survey administration and provide a means for communities to count and estimate unsheltered homeless persons. The data collection methodology and the use of the tracking form will be covered in subsequent sections of this report.

In collaboration with NRC, CEPA/CPPSC developed an extensive training module and materials, delivered trainings, and developed a “train-the-trainer” protocol and PowerPoint presentation for regional coordinators to use in delivering trainings to volunteers and agency staff in their local communities. (See Appendix 4 for PowerPoint presentation). CEPA/CPPSC and NRC created a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to distribute via email as well as post on the website. Due to CEPA’s previous experience in homeless issues, research, and point-in-time studies, it was able to provide general technical assistance throughout the project.

NRC provided the extensive coordination necessary for such a statewide effort, and it facilitated communication and information exchange among key stakeholders throughout the project. NRC drafted and conducted the web-based pre-survey and compiled and distributed the master list of agencies providing homeless services in Colorado. Using multiple lists provided by CDH and the responses to the pre-survey, NRC created a checklist for coordinators to remind them of all the tasks necessary for a successful count. NRC also conducted numerous trainings throughout the state. As mentioned above, NRC collaborated with CEPA/CPPSC on survey revision, the survey pilot and the development of all training materials. It also created and reviewed various sections of the logistics documents.

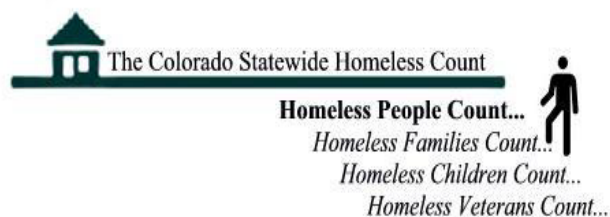
SURVEY

The Housing Subcommittee and other key stakeholders began with MDHI’s earlier point-in-time survey instruments. Over a ten-month period, stakeholders reviewed the survey questions, length of survey, and previously collected MDHI survey data to determine the content of the August, 2006 survey, and worked to simplify and improve the instrument. These meetings were widely publicized and many individuals and organizations had input in the development of the survey. Working through the development and revision of the survey instrument was difficult and time consuming, as numerous dedicated stakeholders held disparate points of view. The need to honor everyone’s voice required patience and perseverance to finalize the survey. (See Appendix 5 for English and Spanish surveys).

Researchers, with the help of volunteers, conducted a pilot of the draft survey in the summer of 2006. The survey pilot was completed in emergency shelters and soup kitchens along the Front Range. Based on this pilot, minor adjustments in wording and formatting were made. Once the Subcommittee had a final document, the researchers translated the survey into Spanish.

COMMUNICATION/MEDIA

The Housing Subcommittee conducted the planning and communications of the count as a *campaign*. The Subcommittee created a logo, developed an extensive website, recruited a spokesperson, provided a media kit, and consistently communicated with key stakeholders statewide via email, telephone, phone conferencing, video conferencing, fax, website, and post.



The project's logo helped convey, both visually and contextually, a consistent message during the campaign.

Media Kit

CDH developed a media kit to assist communities in generating consistent and positive information about the statewide homeless count, and it was a valuable tool in recruiting volunteers for the project. Counties were able to customize their approach to the media and were provided camera-ready tools or templates, which helped reduce their workload. The entire media kit was made available on the Count's website, where staff and volunteers could click on links to the media toolkit, a press release template, and media advisory and press contacts for each of the nine regions. This approach resulted in numerous articles, public service messages and radio programs around the state about homelessness in general and the statewide count, specifically.

Website

In order to create a grassroots homeless count and promote statewide methodological consistency, the homeless count organizers developed the Colorado Homeless Count Website. The website was housed within the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness' website and administered by CDH. It was integral to the project's ability to communicate, educate, and provide consistent information across the state, and was used both to collect and to distribute information. Serving as an organizational tool and an information portal, it contained information critical to the completion of the homeless count.

Website Organization

The website's structure mirrored the structure of the count itself. The Colorado regional map, used to organize the point-in-time count, was prominently displayed on the website's homepage. Clicking on a region in the map directs the user to that region's homepage. Volunteers and county coordinators utilized their region's homepage for information about trainings, contact information, and local media coverage. Additionally, the website allowed coordinators access to the survey instrument and training materials. Coordinators were able to download the English and Spanish surveys as well as the Domestic Violence survey and the tracking form. This guaranteed everyone easy access to the survey.

Website - Information Portal

The website played an important role in facilitating the sharing of information among organizers and regional and county coordinators. Organizers used the website to post instructions, broadcast the date, time and locations of survey trainings, and to outline effective media techniques, including downloading press release templates.

Since training was an important aspect of the homeless count, the website contained all of the training materials, including a detailed explanation of each survey question. The *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)* section of the website allowed volunteers and the regional and county coordinators immediate access to information about the homeless count.

The website also offered guidance on media relations. The organizers of the count considered it extremely important to educate the public on the pending homeless count. However, it was determined that an information campaign focused on traditional metropolitan-based media outlets would not penetrate into small towns and counties. The website was used to disseminate media training for local coordinators, and it housed template press releases so that local communities could publish information regarding the homeless count, and at the same time, tailor their messaging to specific localities. The website may be viewed at <http://www.colorado.gov/cich/pit.htm>.

PART III FINDINGS: THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES - WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Part III provides information about the survey respondents. It describes respondent characteristics including age; gender; military service; race and ethnicity; seasonal work status; disability status; reasons for homelessness; duration and episodes of homelessness; chronic homelessness; government benefits; and needed services. It also profiles all survey homeless in terms of place stayed Monday night; age of relatives and relationship to respondent; household situation; newly homeless; and unsheltered homeless.

Nearly 7,000 (6,665) respondents were determined to have been homeless, and were accompanied by 5,225 relatives. Based on the survey, a total of 11,890 persons were homeless on Monday night, August 28, 2006.¹⁴

INTRODUCTION AND HOW TO READ THIS SECTION

This part reports on the respondents who completed the survey *and* the relatives they documented as staying with them who also were determined to be without a permanent place to live. The report refers to “respondents” when the data reflect just those persons who answered the survey, and to “all survey homeless” when the data reflect both groups (respondents plus the relatives they identified as also being homeless) taken together. (“All survey homeless” does NOT include aggregate domestic violence data or counts and estimates of unsheltered homeless persons.)

Final Database/Variables/Survey Data

Final Database

Table 2 describes the number of surveys that were collected, entered, and removed from the final database.

Table 2. SURVEY COLLECTION and FINAL DATABASE	
Surveys collected/entered	8,377
Case removed/no data	1
Duplicates removed	134
Not homeless removed	1,577
Final number in database	6,665

Variables

Most survey variables are reported only for respondents. Some variables can be extrapolated to all survey homeless. For example, survey respondents were asked in what type of place they spent Monday night. If the respondent identified that s/he was a single parent and had three

¹⁴ Some respondents identified themselves as having children or being part of a couple but did not provide information about these relatives; and conversely, 207 respondents indicating “single” status provided information about 398 relatives who also were without a permanent place to live. This latter group of relatives were included in the dataset.

children, then where the respondent spent Monday night was extrapolated to the children (see Part VII, Methodology Section. *Reporting on Survey Data Points/Variables*).

Table 3 describes what survey variables are reported only for respondents, and those reported for all survey homeless.

Table 3. REPORTING ON SURVEY VARIABLES		
Variables	Respondents	All Survey Homeless
Age	X	X
Chronic homelessness	X	
Disabling conditions	X	
Duration of homelessness	X	
Episodes of homelessness	X	
Ethnicity	X	
Foster care/out of home placement	X	
Gender	X	
Government benefits	X	
Have permanent place to live	X	X
Household situation	X	X
Last permanent place	X	
Military service	X	
Money from working	X	
Newly homeless		X
Night of August 28		X
Number of relatives	X	
Reasons for homelessness	X	
Relationship to Respondent	X	X
Seasonal resort worker	X	
Seasonal/year-round farm worker	X	
Services	X	

Missing Responses

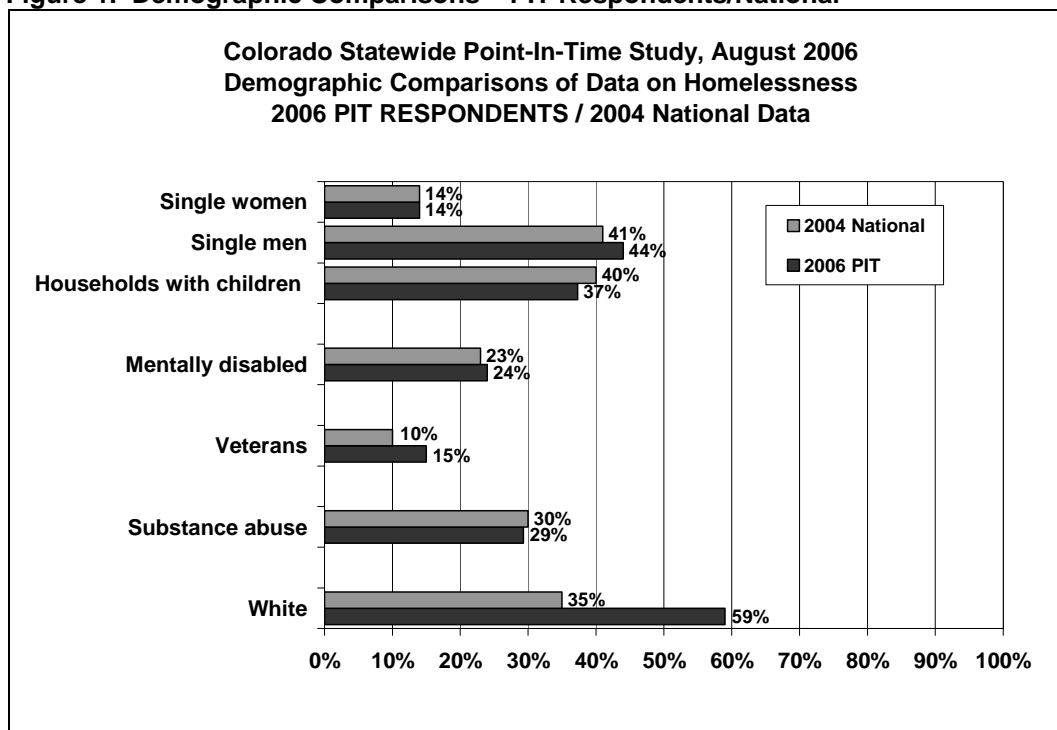
Survey respondents did not complete every question; because of these missing data, the numbers and percentages in the report do not always equal the number of respondents or all survey homeless. The percentages do not represent the total number of respondents, that is, the percentages for most variables do not include missing responses.¹⁵

¹⁵ The exception is that, for questions where respondents could check "all that apply," the percentage giving each response is based on all respondents.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The data from the Colorado point-in time survey shows that Colorado homeless persons look similar to the homeless population nationwide. Figure 1 provides a brief demographic comparison of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' 2004 national data and Colorado's summer 2006 statewide homeless data for respondents. The exception is that, in Colorado, a higher percentage of homeless persons identified themselves as white than in the national data.¹⁶ However, minorities make up a greater percentage of the homeless population compared to Colorado's general population. That said, all national data sources report higher percentages of homeless minorities than does Colorado. This suggests that the survey process did not completely capture homeless minorities, possibly due to language barriers and the fact that the current political climate might have made immigrant populations afraid or unwilling to participate in the survey.

Figure 1. Demographic Comparisons – PIT Respondents/National



¹⁶ The 59 percent identifying as White in Figure 1 includes some respondents who said they were Hispanic/Latino in a separate question about ethnicity. When these respondents are counted as minority rather than as white, the breakdown statewide is 51.7% white and 48.3% minority.

Household Situation

Respondents

The household situation identified by the respondent reflects how respondents portray themselves. Researchers added a category to those listed in the survey: “Grandparent with children.”¹⁷

- People who identified themselves as “single” or “part of a couple without children” are grouped as “Households Without children.”
- People who identified themselves as being a single parent with children, part of a couple with children, or a grandparent with children, are categorized as “Households With Children.”¹⁸

Figure 2. Household Situation

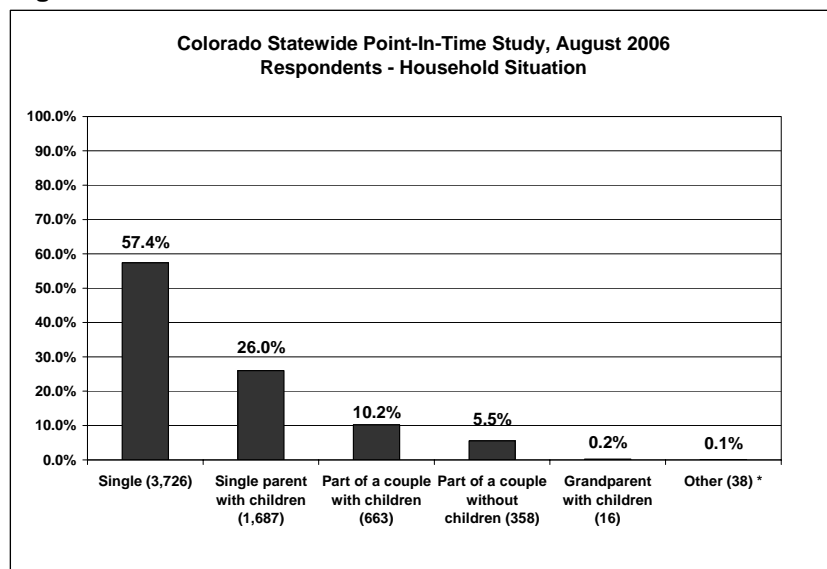
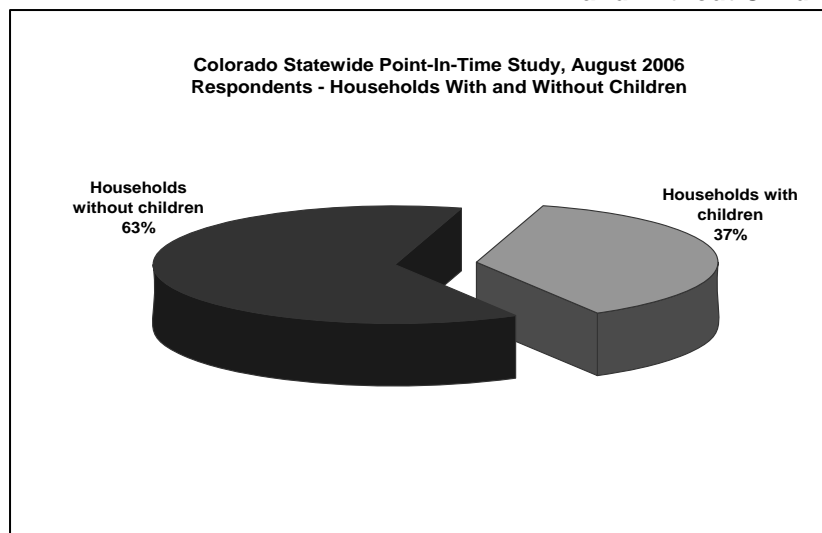


Figure 2 describes respondents' household situation. Over half of respondents (57.4%) were single. One quarter (26.0%) identified themselves as single parents with children, and 10 percent (10.2%) said they were part of a couple with children.

Figure 3. Households With and Without Children

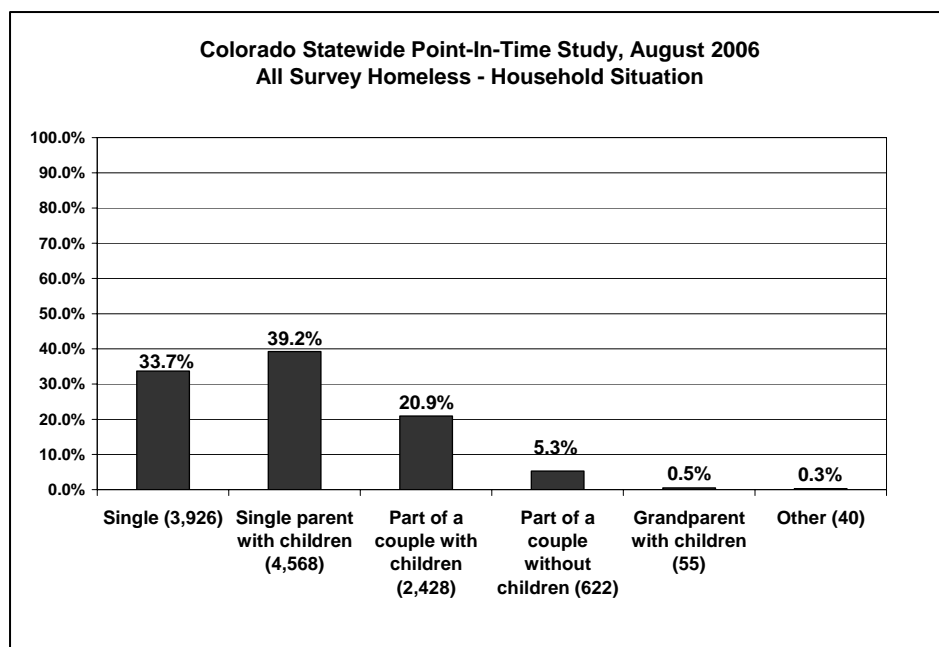
More than one-third of respondents (37.3%) were classified as households with children. (Figure 3)



¹⁷ Respondents were identified as being grandparents with grandchildren if they were staying with their grandchildren and (1) not staying with family or friends and (2) the children's parents were not living with the family.

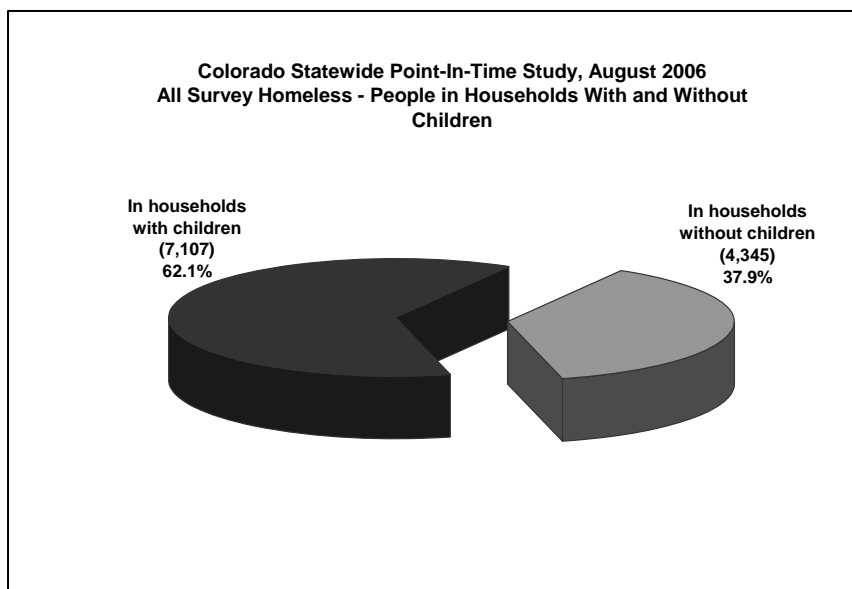
¹⁸ Classification into households with or without children was primarily based on responses to Q8, household situation. However, where data were inconsistent, we also considered other factors. For a complete discussion of this process, see Part VII, Data Cleaning, Identifying Households With and Without Children.

Figure 4. All Survey Homeless People by Household Situation



All Survey Homeless People in households headed by a single parent accounted for the largest group (39.2%) of all survey homeless people, followed by single individuals (33.7%). Households with children are one of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population. Nearly two-thirds (62.1%) of all survey homeless persons in Colorado were in households with children.¹⁹

Figure 5. All Survey Homeless People in Households With and Without Children



¹⁹ A total of 86 survey respondents were age 17 and under. Of this group, 64 were classified as being in households without children, because respondents and their spouses were considered to be adults, regardless of their age. In this situation, however, it is clear that these 64 respondents, while treated as adults in the report, are considered to be children by any common sense definition. In future studies, it may be determined that these respondents be classified as households with children because they are under 18.

Age

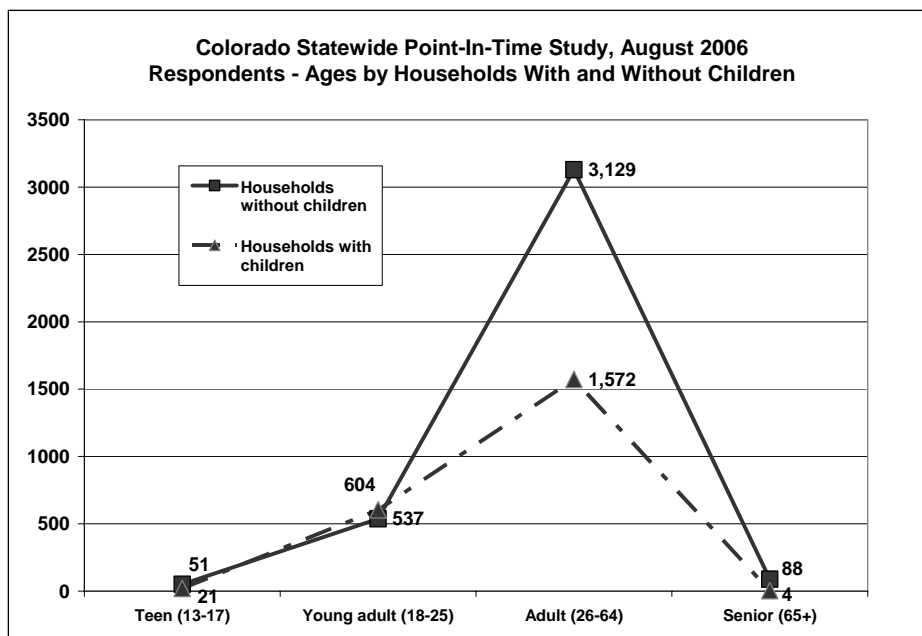
Respondents

Respondents (the people that actually answered surveys) ranged in age from 5 to 98 years. Their average (mean) age was 39 (38.7) years old. Thirteen respondents ages 12 years old and under submitted surveys. Since researchers had no information to explain this finding, these surveys were retained in the homeless dataset.

Table 4. AGE OF RESPONDENTS		
AGE GROUP	NUMBER	%
School Age (12 and under)	13	.2
Teen (13-17)	73	1.2
Young Adult (18-25)	1,163	18.7
Adult (26-64)	4,872	78.4
Senior (65 and over)	97	1.6
TOTAL	6,218	

Although less than 2 percent (1.6%) were age 65 and over, the National Coalition for the Homeless reports increased homelessness among elderly persons, citing the lack of affordable housing as the primary cause.

Figure 6. Age Groups by Households With and Without Children



Respondents' Age Group by Family Status

In the young adult group, there were more respondents with children (604) than without children (537). In the remaining age groups, the majority of respondents were in households without children. Figure 6 provides the number of respondents in each age category by households with and without children.²⁰

²⁰ As is the case for other data points throughout this report, some numbers and/or percentages do not "match." For example, Figure 6 is a crosstabulation (the cross-referencing or comparison of two variables to determine how they are interrelated) of age in categories by households with and without children. Figure 6 shows that there are 72 teens when combining the household categories; however, Table 5 shows there are 73 teens. This discrepancy is due to missing responses in one or more of the crosstab categories.

Ages for All Survey Homeless

Figures 7 and 8 describe the ages of all survey homeless persons and the ages of relatives accompanying respondents, respectively. Half (51.2%) of all survey homeless persons were adults age 26-64. There were a total of **3,643 homeless children and teens**, one-third (34.0%) of all people who were homeless on Monday night, August 28, 2006.

Figure 7. All Survey Homeless – Age Groups

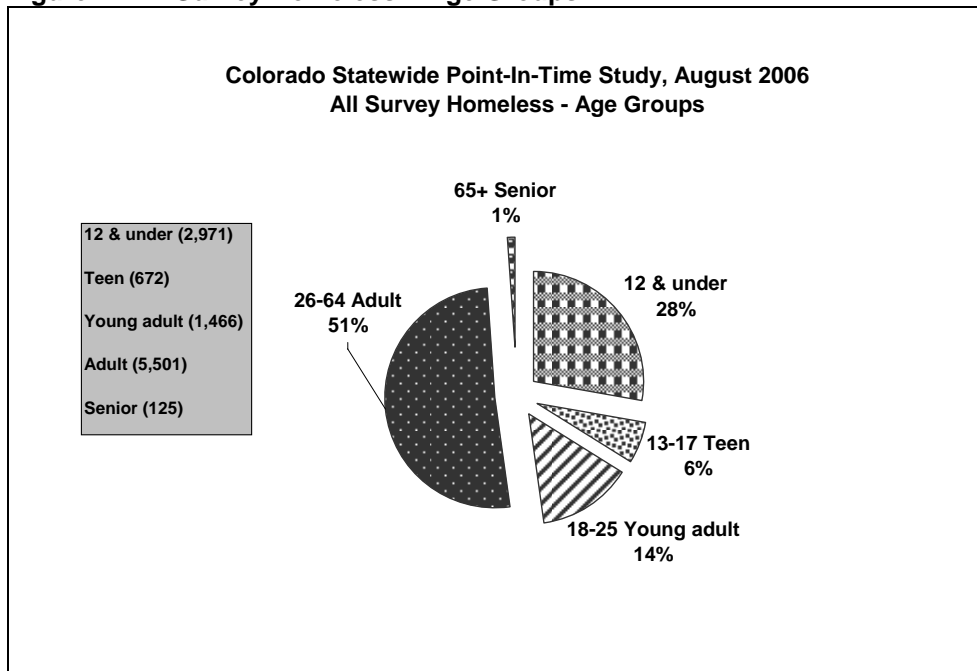
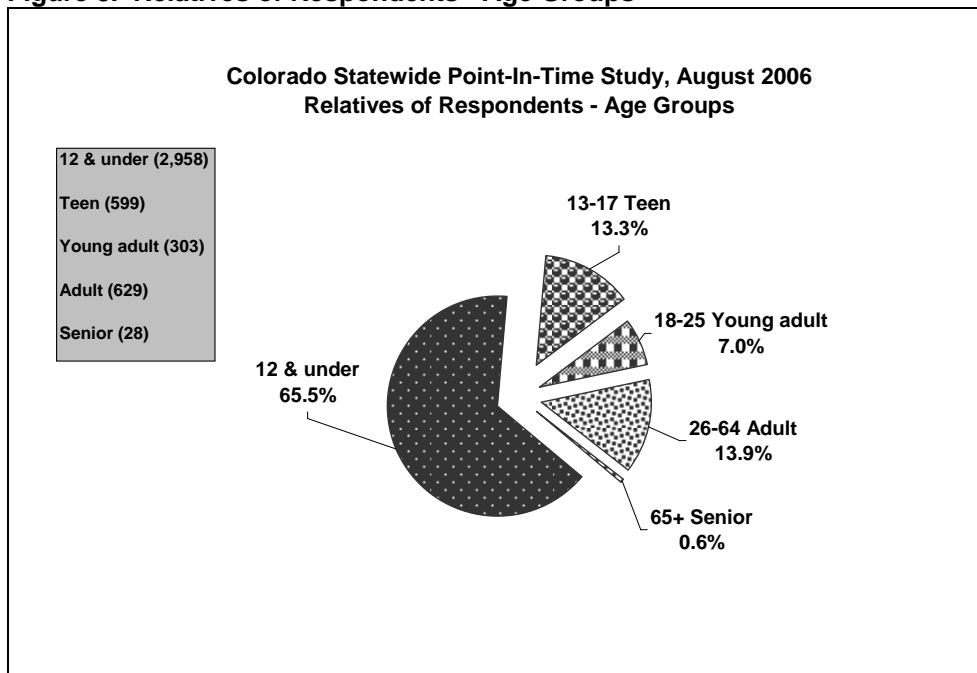
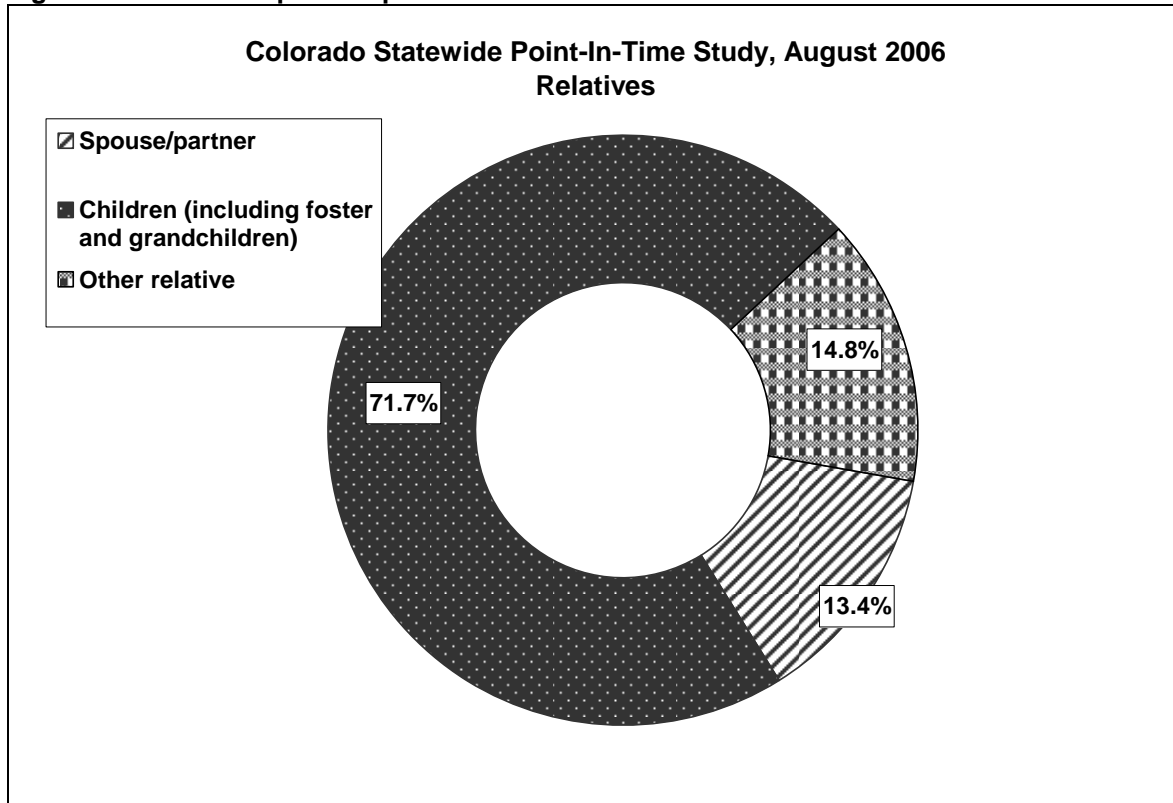


Figure 8. Relatives of Respondents - Age Groups



Respondents were asked the ages and relationship of all relatives who were homeless with them. More than two-thirds (71.7%) of the relatives they identified were children under age 18. “Other” relatives consisted of adult children, aunts/uncles, siblings, cousins, grandparents, nieces/nephews, and parents.

Figure 9. Relationship to Respondents



Gender

Over half (56.7%) of respondents were male as indicated in Figure 10 below. Single respondents were predominantly male, while single parent families were almost exclusively headed by females. Females were more likely to complete the survey for a couple (with or without children).

Figure 10. Gender

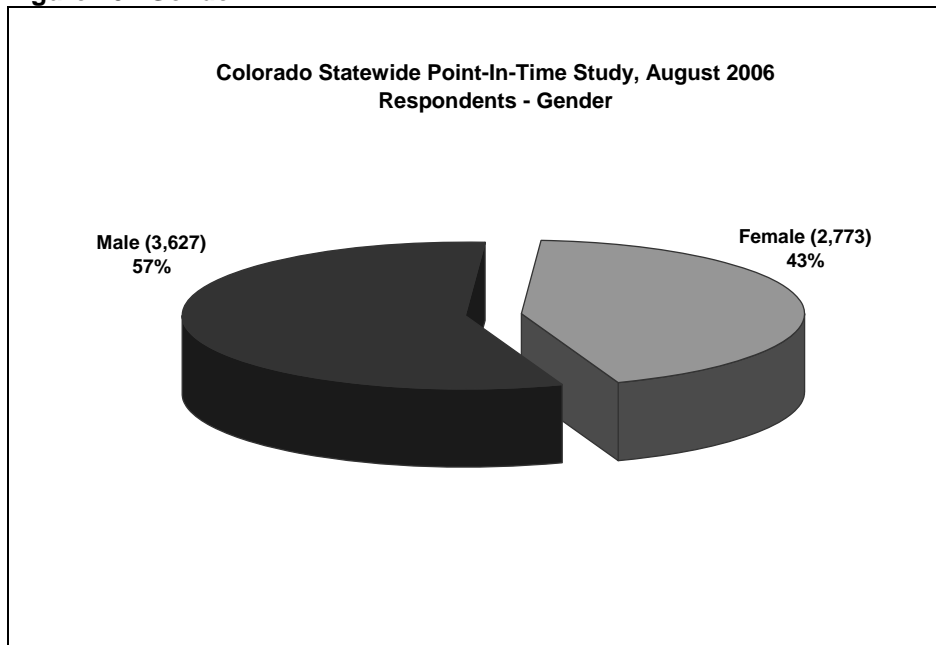
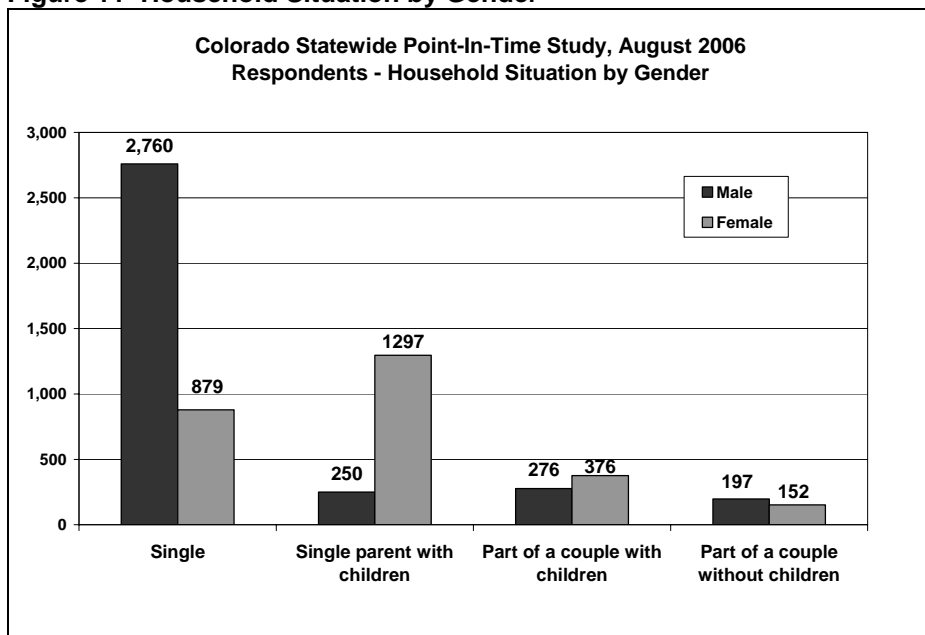


Figure 11 Household Situation by Gender



Race and Ethnicity of Respondents

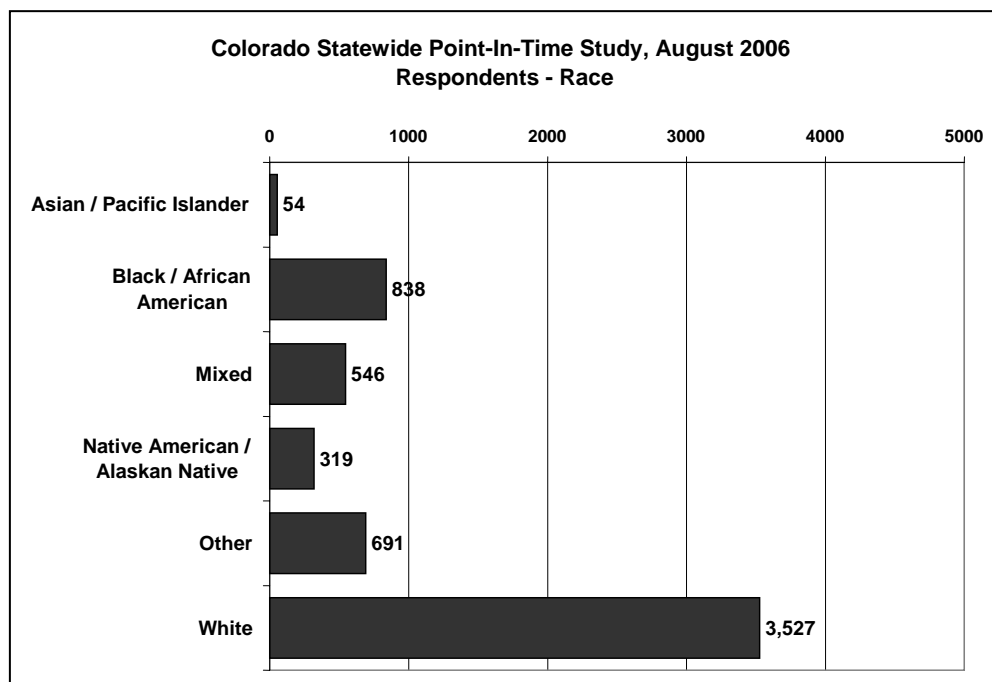
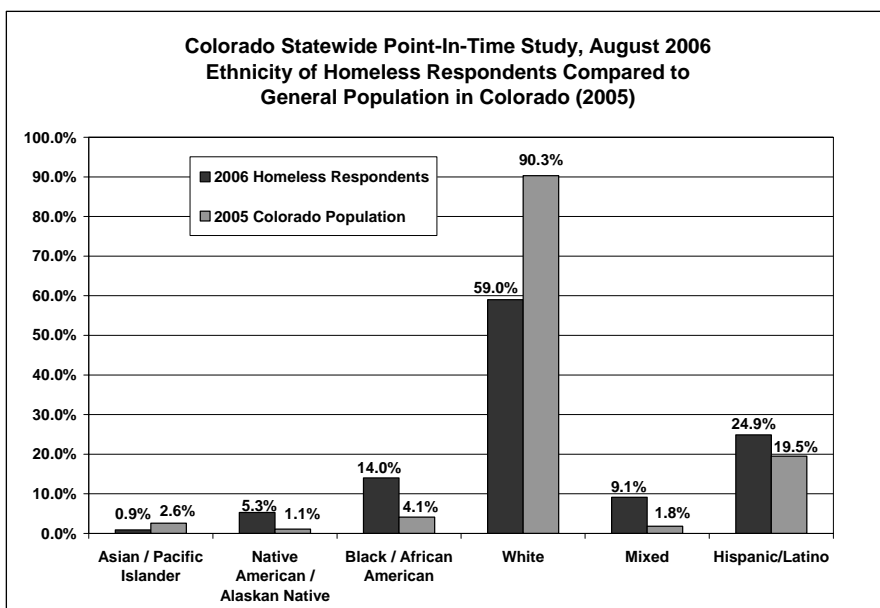


Figure 12. Racial Background

Figure 13. Race/Ethnicity of Homeless Respondents and Colorado Population^{21 22}

The statewide homeless survey asked respondents to identify their race and ethnicity in two separate questions, 1) Q7: "Which one category best describes your racial background?" and 2) Q6: "Do you consider yourself to be Spanish/ Hispanic/ Latino?" Figures 12 and 13 describe race and ethnicity data reported by respondents. Compared to the general population in Colorado in 2005, minorities were over-represented and whites were under-represented among Colorado's homeless population.²³



²¹ Since race and ethnicity were asked as separate questions, respondents who identified as Hispanic/Latino also could identify as white. This inflates the proportion of white respondents as compared to minorities. When respondents who identify as Hispanic/Latino are counted as minority rather than white, the breakdown statewide is 51.7% white and 48.3% minority.

²² The race categories do not add to 100 percent because the "other" category is not included in the comparison. Statewide, 11.6% reported their race as "other."

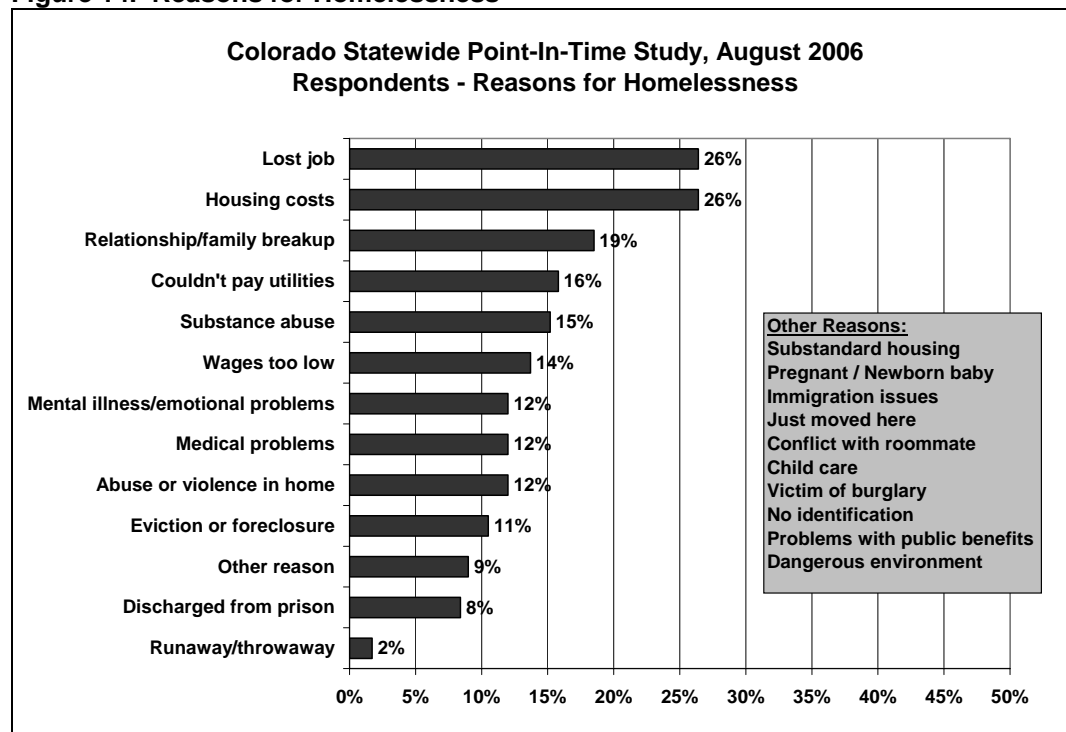
²³ U.S. Census Bureau. "State & County QuickFacts." <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08000.html>>

REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS

Figures 14 and 15 describe the reasons for respondents' current spell of homelessness. Figure 15 shows the top 10 reasons for homelessness by grouped household situation; it gives the percentages of households with and without children that reported each reason.

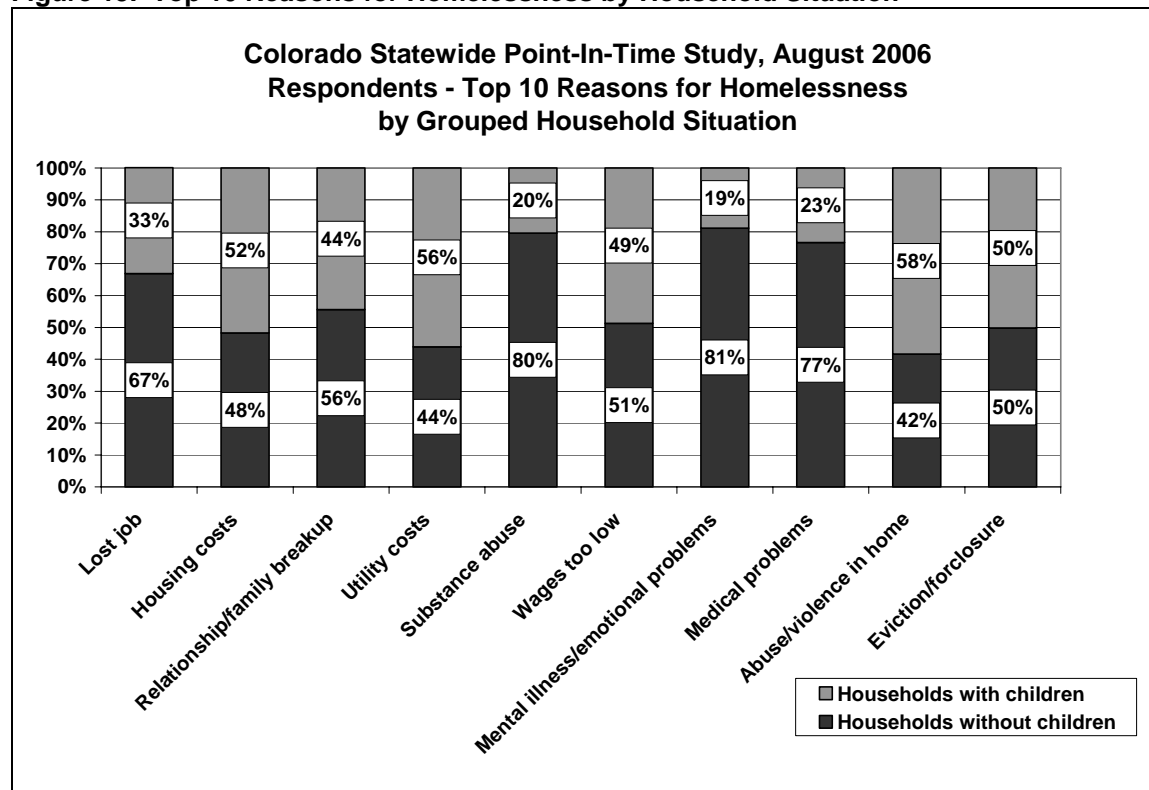
Respondents were given a list of possible reasons for homelessness and asked to check "all that apply." On average, respondents indicated one or two reasons for their homelessness. The most common reasons are loss of job and housing costs, followed by family/relationship breakup and utility costs. Slightly more than half (53%) of the reported reasons related to the cost of housing (housing costs, utility costs and eviction/foreclosure), and almost forty percent (39%) related to serious conditions (substance abuse, mental illness and medical problems). A number of respondents wrote in "other" reasons for their homelessness. The most common "other" reason was substandard housing.

Figure 14. Reasons for Homelessness



Respondents in households without children were much more likely than those in households with children to report substance abuse, mental illness and medical problems as a reason for their current homelessness. In contrast, respondents in households with children were more likely to say that abuse or violence in the home was a cause of their homelessness.

Figure 15. Top 10 Reasons for Homelessness by Household Situation



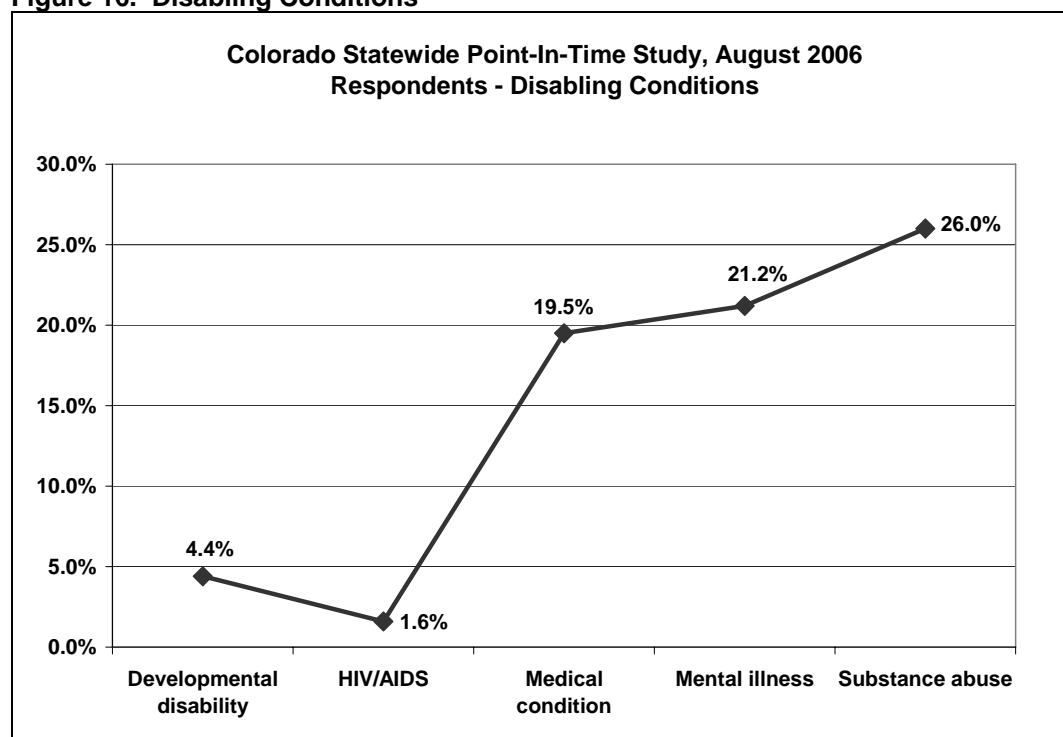
DISABLING CONDITIONS

Homeless people suffer from high rates of mental and physical health problems and are far more likely to suffer from chronic health issues. These problems are exacerbated by the stressful and chaotic nature of their living conditions. Often, they are unable to get treatment when they become ill, and rarely have access to preventive health care.²⁴

HUD requires Continuums of Care to determine if, at the time of the survey, survey respondents have any of the following disabling conditions – serious mental illness, a serious medical condition, chronic substance abuse issues, a developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. *Half of all respondents (50.9%) reported having at least one of these chronic conditions.*

As shown in Figure 16, one in four survey respondents (26.0%) indicated that they had chronic substance abuse issues. Approximately one in five reported mental illness (21.2%) and medical conditions (19.5%). Due to the stigmatizing nature of these questions, it is likely that disabling conditions were under-reported. Single persons (71%) and households without children (77%) were most likely to have at least one of the five disabling conditions.

Figure 16. Disabling Conditions



²⁴ National Coalition for the Homeless. "Health Care and Homelessness, NCH Fact Sheet #8." June 2006. <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/Health.pdf>

Figure 17. At Least One Disabling Condition by Household Situation

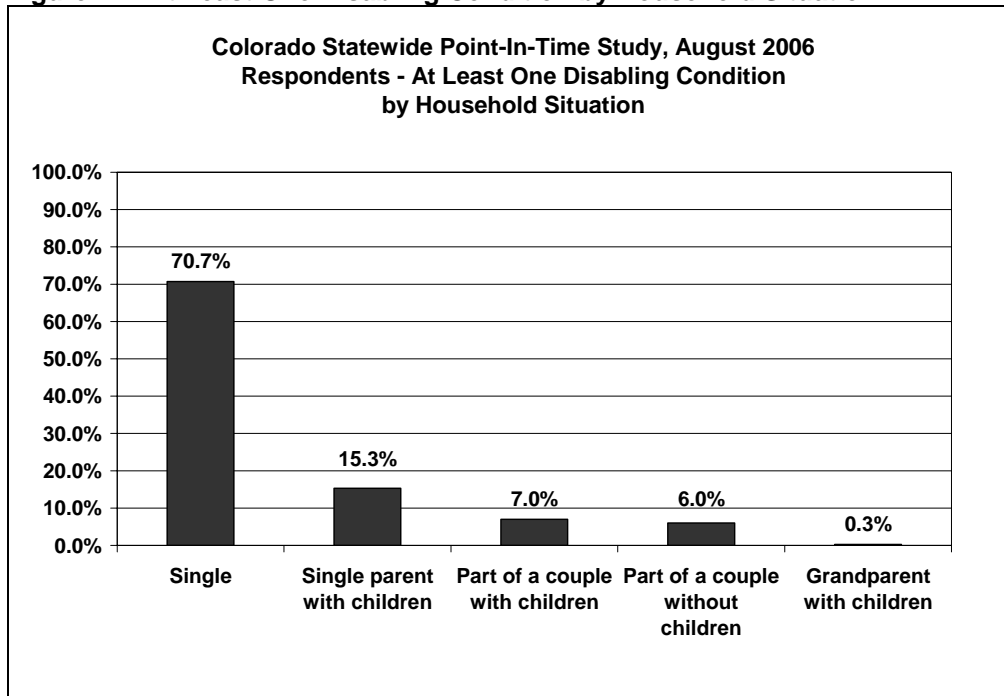
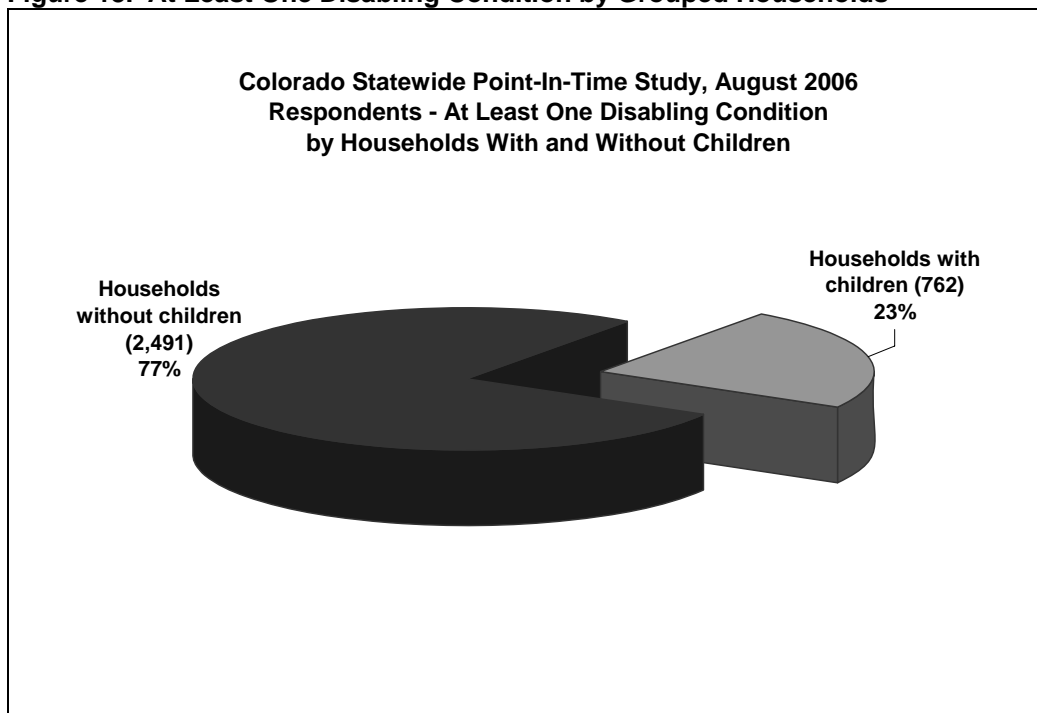


Figure 18. At Least One Disabling Condition by Grouped Households

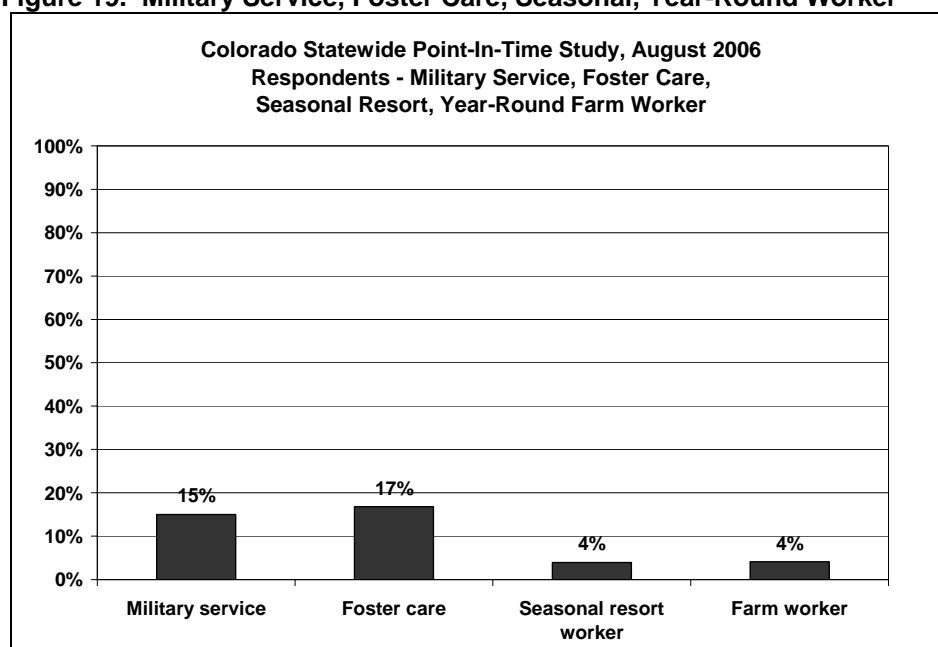


MILITARY SERVICE, FOSTER CARE, SEASONAL RESORT, YEAR-ROUND FARM WORKER

Respondents were asked if they had served in the military, were ever in foster care or another type of out-of-home placement, and if they were a seasonal resort worker or a seasonal or year-round farm worker. Responses to these questions are helpful in understanding and planning for needed services.

- In August 2006 in Colorado, the point-in-time data show that veterans comprised 15 percent (15.0%) of the homeless population overall, and 25 percent (24.8%) of adult homeless males. Of those who reported serving in the military, 94 percent (93.7%) were male. (Nationally, between 23 and 40 percent of homeless adults are veterans, and over the course of a year, as many as 500,000 veterans experience homelessness. The National Law Center reports that 33 percent of male homeless adults are veterans.²⁵)
- Seventeen percent (16.8%) said they had been in foster care. Nearly an equal number of homeless persons who reported that they had been in foster care are male (52.7%) and female (47.3%).
- Approximately four percent are seasonal resort workers (3.9%) or farm workers (4.1%).

Figure 19. Military Service, Foster Care, Seasonal, Year-Round Worker



Surveys typically undercount the homeless, as discussed in Part VI of this report. Additionally, the number of homeless seasonal resort and farm workers is difficult to obtain due to the political debate regarding undocumented individuals and families in the United States. This population may be reluctant to provide personal information. For this reason, seasonal and year-round workers may not be accurately reflected in this study.

²⁵ National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. "Homeless Veterans Fact Sheet #14, June 2006." <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/veterans.pdf>

WORKING/GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

Figure 20. Income from Working

Respondents were asked if they or anyone else in their household received any money from working since the beginning of 2006. Over half (55.8%) said that someone in their household had worked in 2006. As shown in Figure 20, the majority (58.0%) who reported income from work were in households without children.

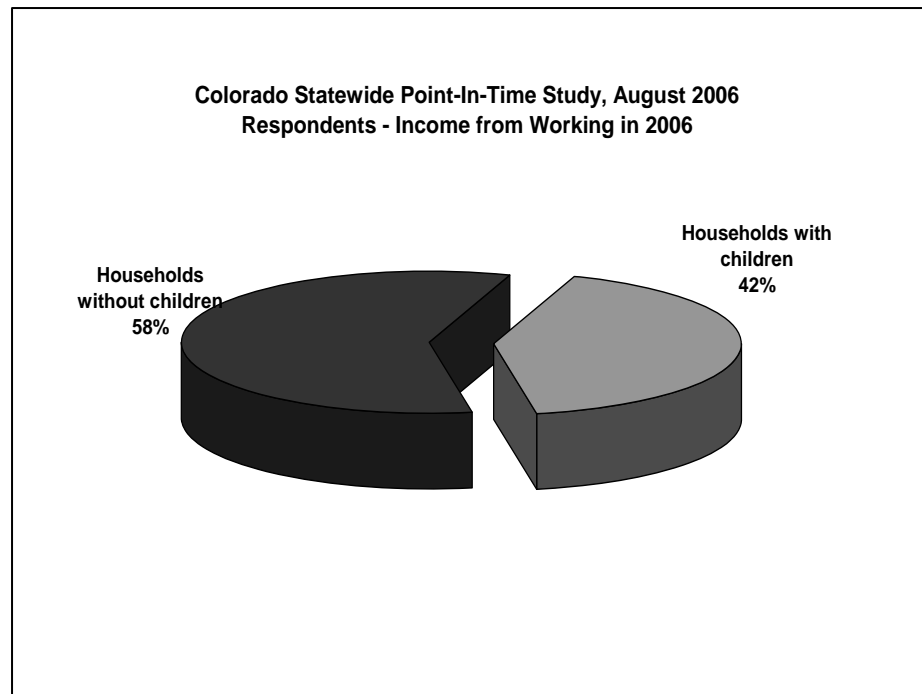
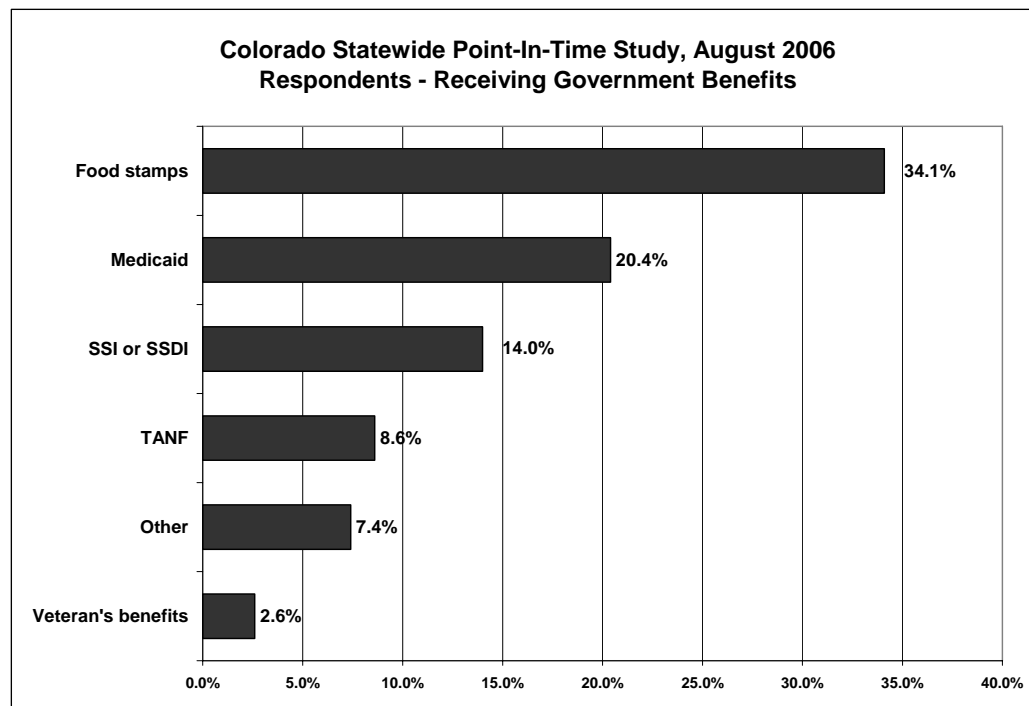


Figure 21. Government Benefits



Respondents were asked if they or anyone in their household was receiving SSI/SSDI, TANF, Food Stamps, VA pension/benefits, Medicaid or Medicare, or any other government benefit. Half (52.5%) were receiving at least one government benefit. More than one in

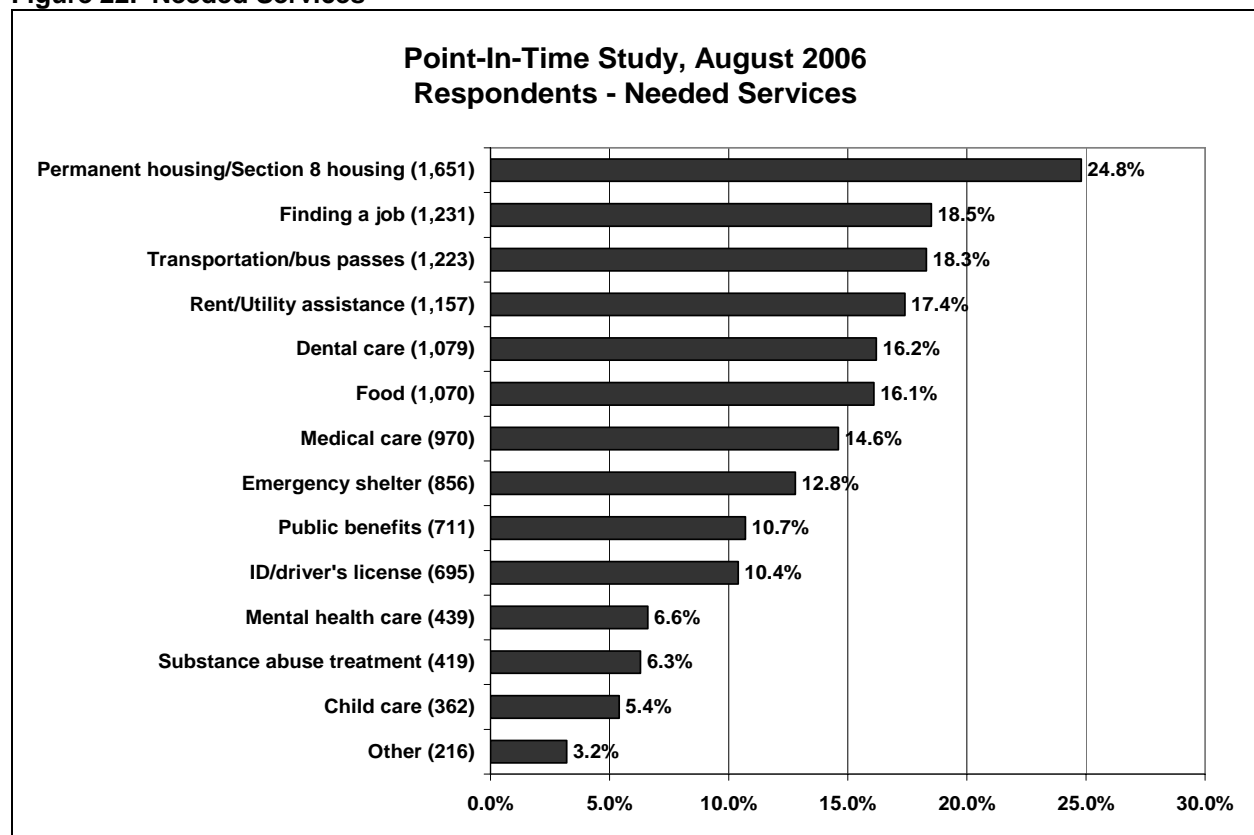
three respondents (34.1%) reported receiving Food Stamps, and one in five (20.4%) was receiving Medicaid/Medicare.

NEEDED SERVICES

Respondents were asked, “In the past month, what services did you or anyone in your family need but could not get?” Nearly two-thirds (63.2%) of respondents reported that, in the past month, they or another family member needed at least one service they could not obtain. The most frequently needed service was permanent housing, cited by one-quarter (24.8%) of respondents. Other frequently needed services included help finding a job, transportation, and rent and/or utility assistance.

Respondents indicated that they needed a number of services that were not listed in the question. In order of occurrence, these services were: basic needs including clothing, etc.; legal assistance; optical needs (primarily eyeglasses); and education expenses, including classes and training.

Figure 22. Needed Services



DURATION AND EPISODES OF HOMELESSNESS

Duration of homelessness refers to how long a particular episode of homelessness has lasted. *Number of episodes* refers to the number of separate times a person has experienced homelessness, regardless of how long each of the episodes lasted.

Duration

The greatest proportion of respondents who were homeless on August 28, 2006, had been without a permanent place to live for more than one month but less than one year. Sixteen percent (15.9%) had been homeless for less than a month, and 11 percent (10.6%) had been homeless for more than three years. (Figure 23)

Men and women followed a similar pattern in duration of homelessness, although men were more likely to have been homeless for more than three years, as were respondents in households without children. (Figures 24 and 25)

Figure 23. Duration – Length of Time Without a Permanent Place to Live

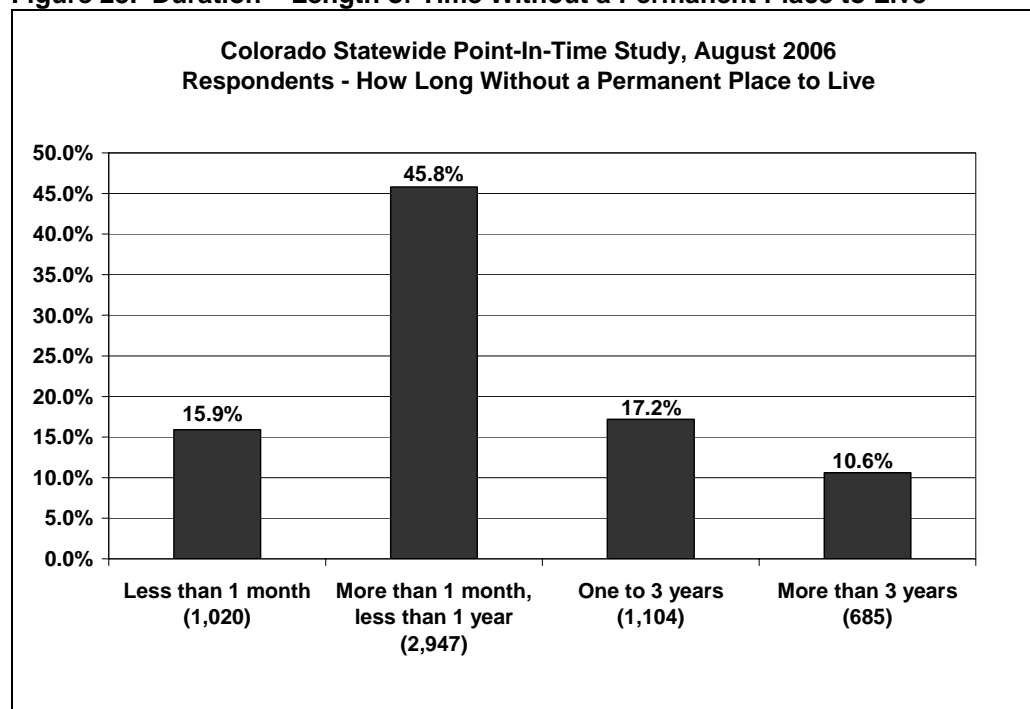


Figure 24. Duration of Homelessness by Gender

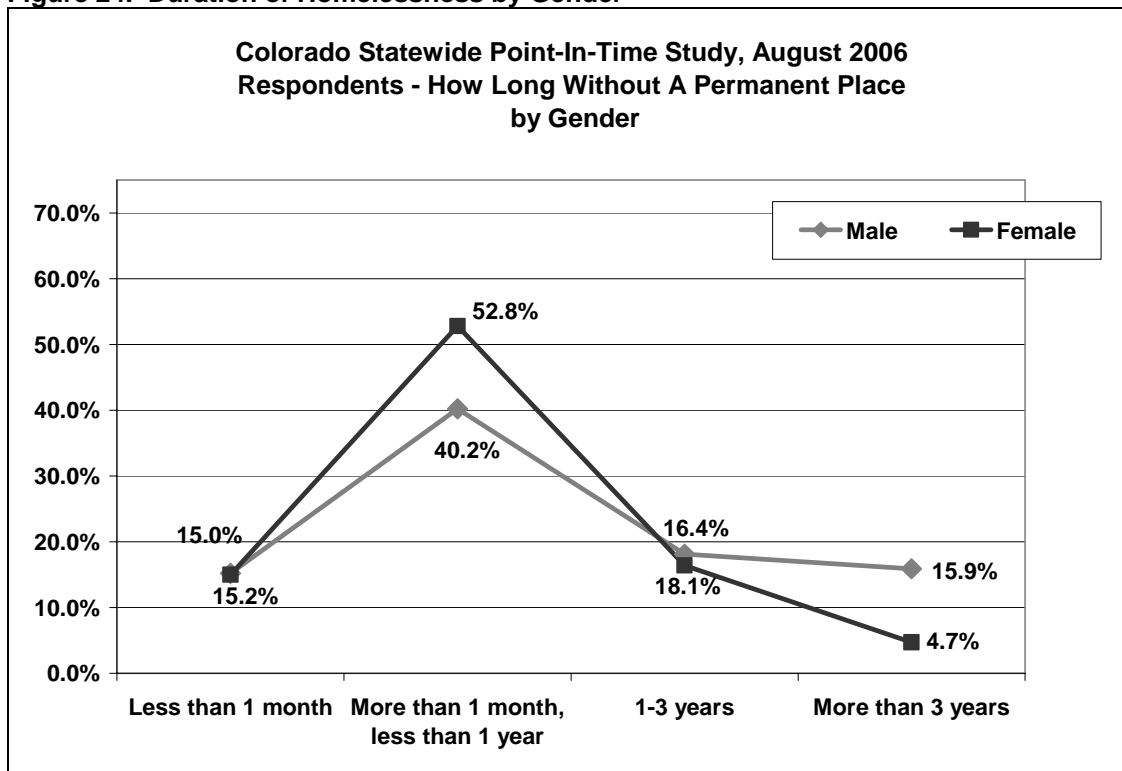
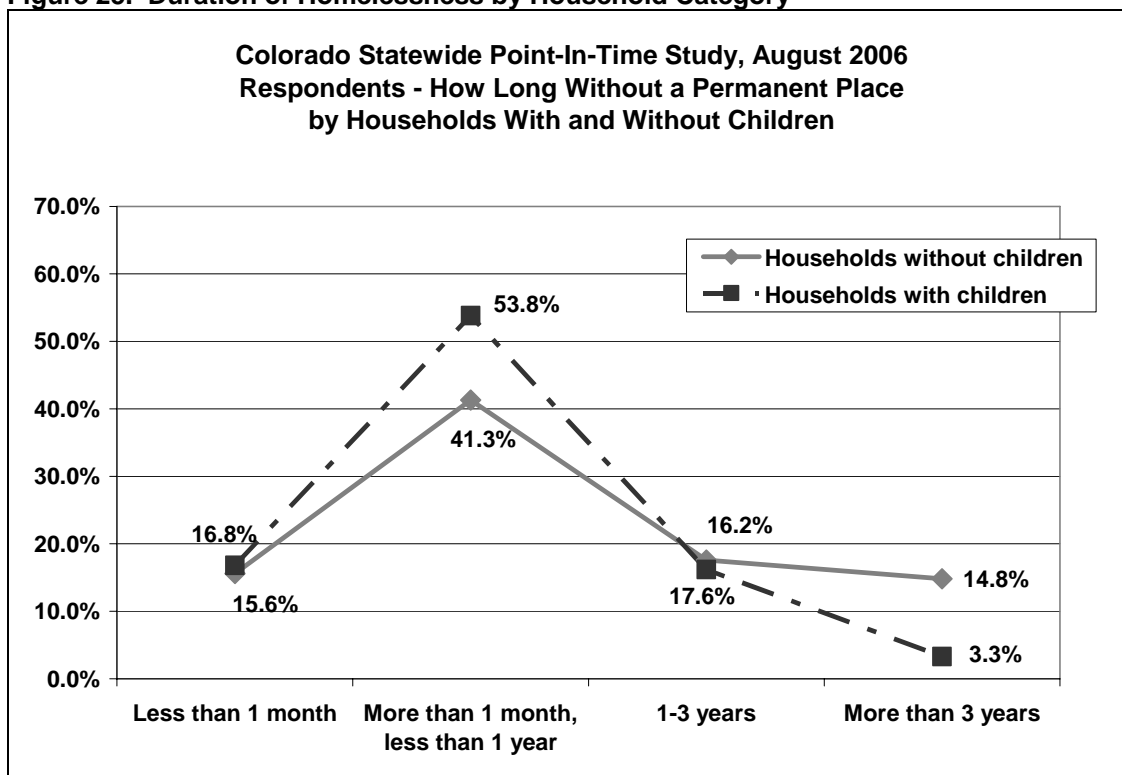


Figure 25. Duration of Homelessness by Household Category



Episodes

On the night of August 28, 2006, one-third (32.4%) of respondents reported they were experiencing their first episode of homelessness in the last three years. Almost one in five (18.3%) had been homeless five or more times in the last three years. (Figure 26)

Figure 26. Episodes – Number of Times Without a Permanent Place in Last Three Years

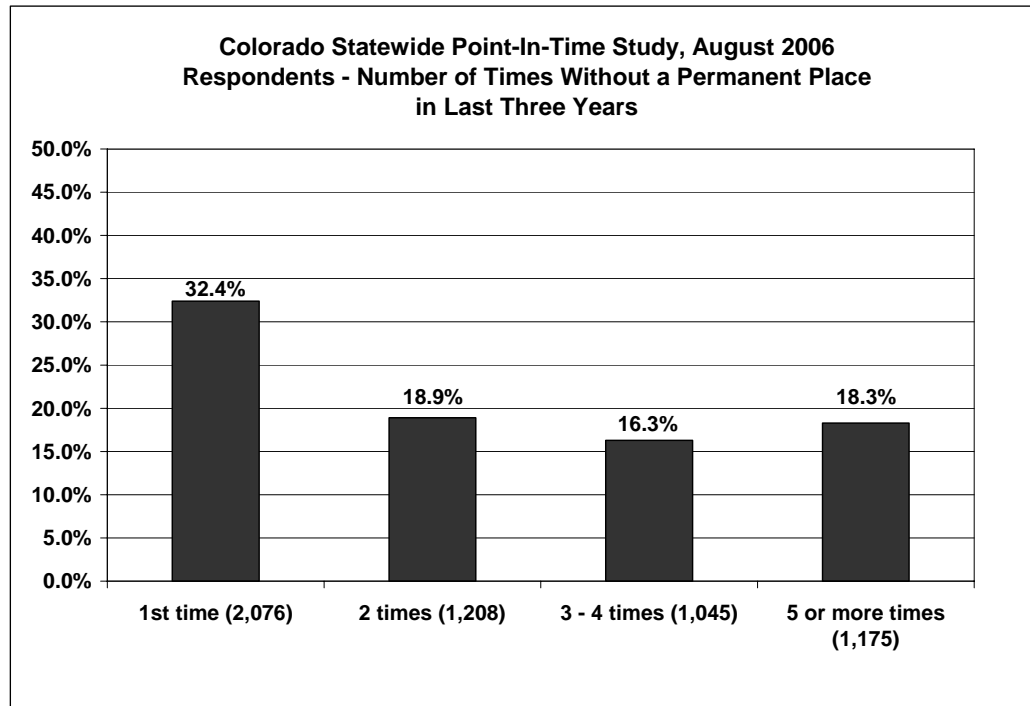
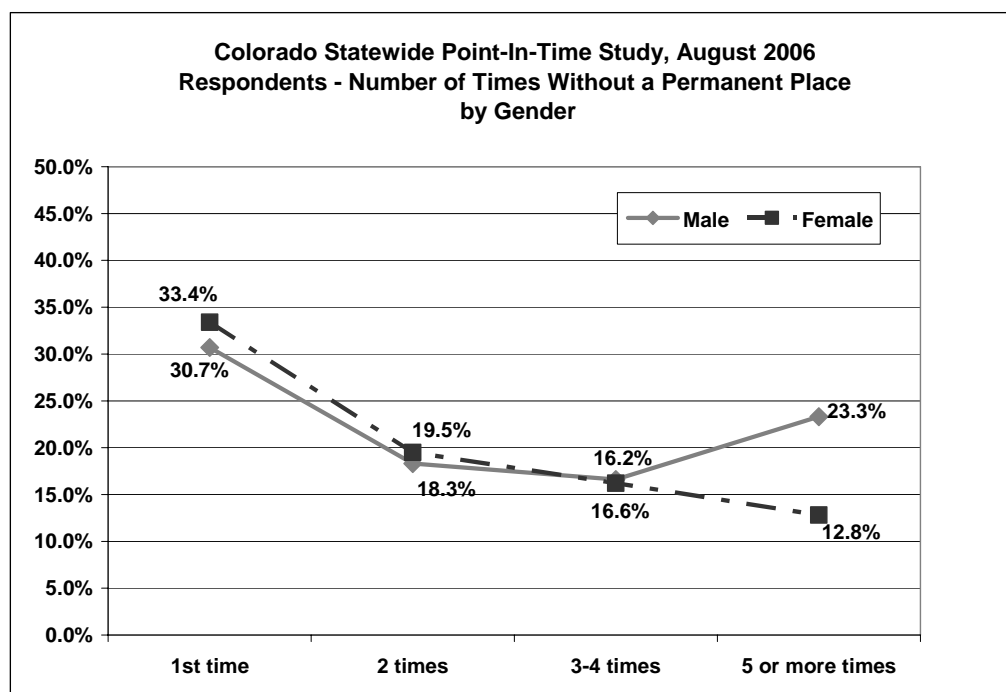


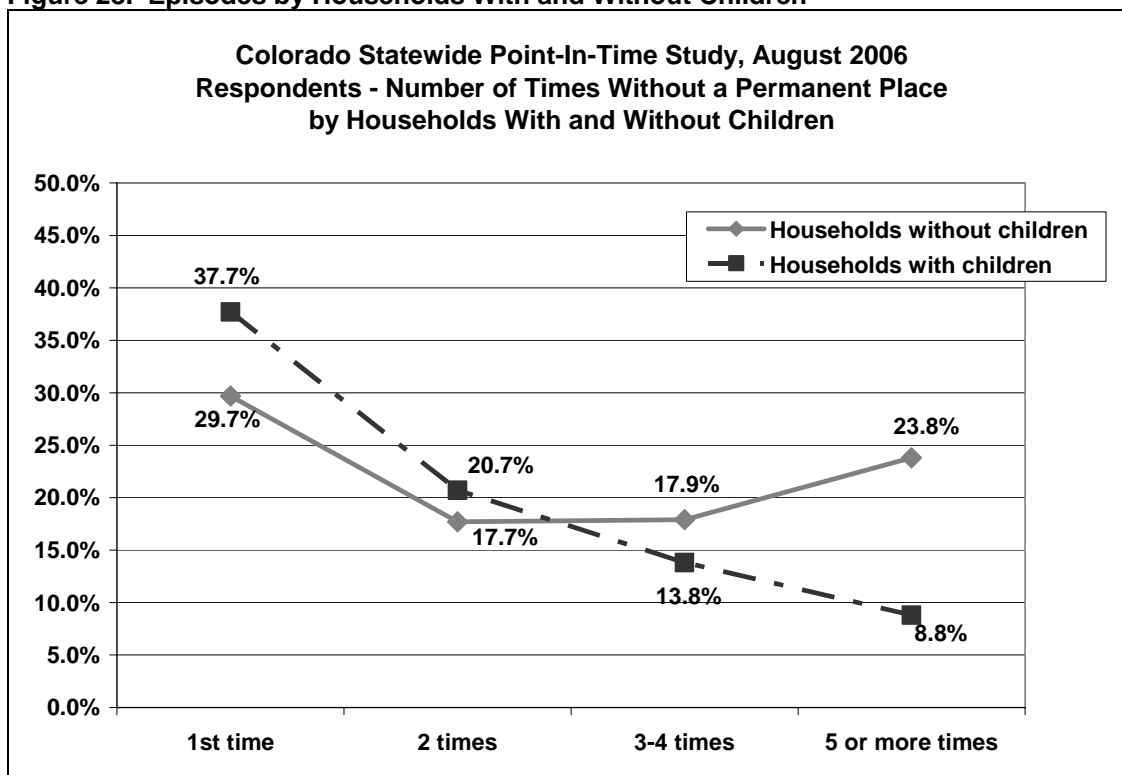
Figure 27. Episodes by Gender



Men had been homeless more often than women over the last three years. Men were nearly twice as likely as women to have been homeless five or more times.

Respondents in households without children also had experienced more episodes of homelessness in the last three years. (Figure 28)

Figure 28. Episodes by Households With and Without Children



CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

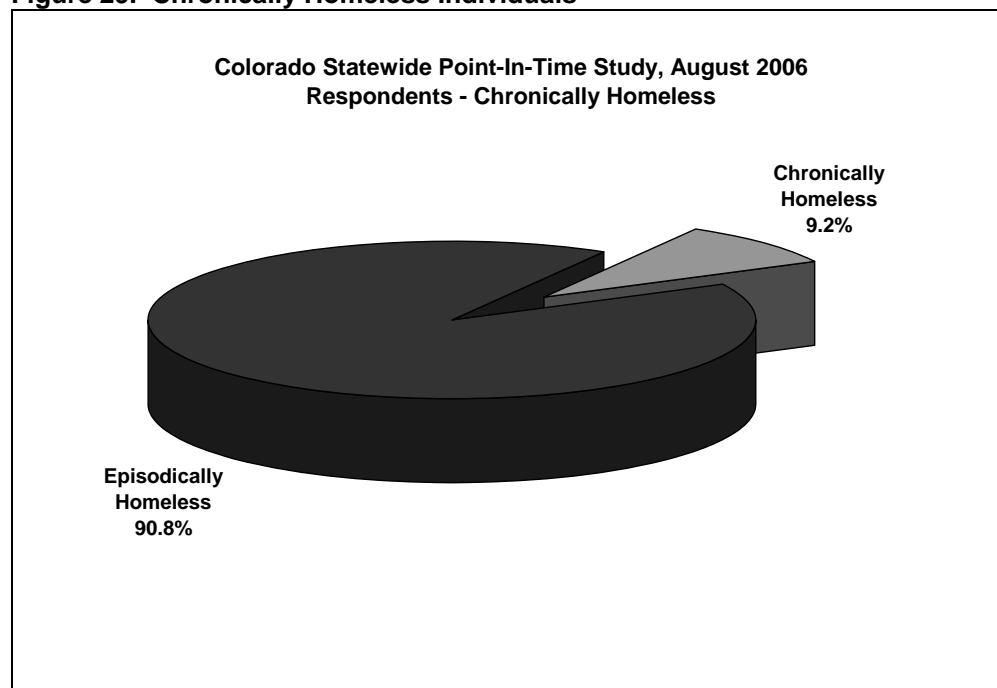
“Chronic homelessness” is long-term or repeated homelessness, accompanied by a serious disability.²⁶ It is characterized by people living in an emergency shelter or in a place not suitable for human habitation. HUD’s definition of chronic homelessness adds the condition that a homeless person is single and alone, although service providers and advocates across the nation know that chronic homelessness affects families and children as well.

Colorado’s point-in-time study counted individuals who are chronically homeless using HUD’s definition as follows:

- Single persons living alone, and
- Having a chronic debilitating condition, and
- Sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation and/or in an emergency homeless shelter, “and
- Having been homeless continually for one year or more **or** having four or more episodes of homelessness in three or more years.

Using HUD’s definition, almost 10 percent (9.2% or 610 respondents) were chronically homeless; the great majority of the 610 chronically homeless persons (86.4%) were male.

Figure 29. Chronically Homeless Individuals



²⁶ HUD defines “a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability or chronic physical illness or disability” as a disabling condition. A disabling condition limits an individual’s ability to work or perform activities of daily living.

WHERE “ALL SURVEY HOMELESS” PEOPLE SPENT MONDAY NIGHT

Survey respondents were asked in what county they spent Monday night, August 28. Figures 30 and 31 describe where all survey homeless persons spent that night by Continuum and the nine point-in-time regions.²⁷

Figure 30. All Survey Homeless Persons by Continuum of Care

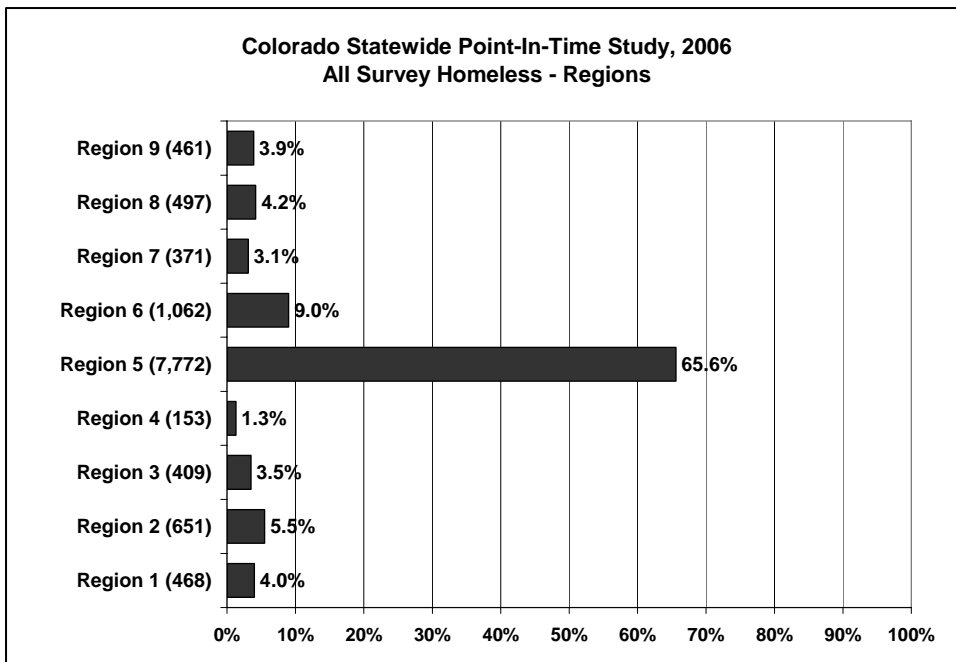
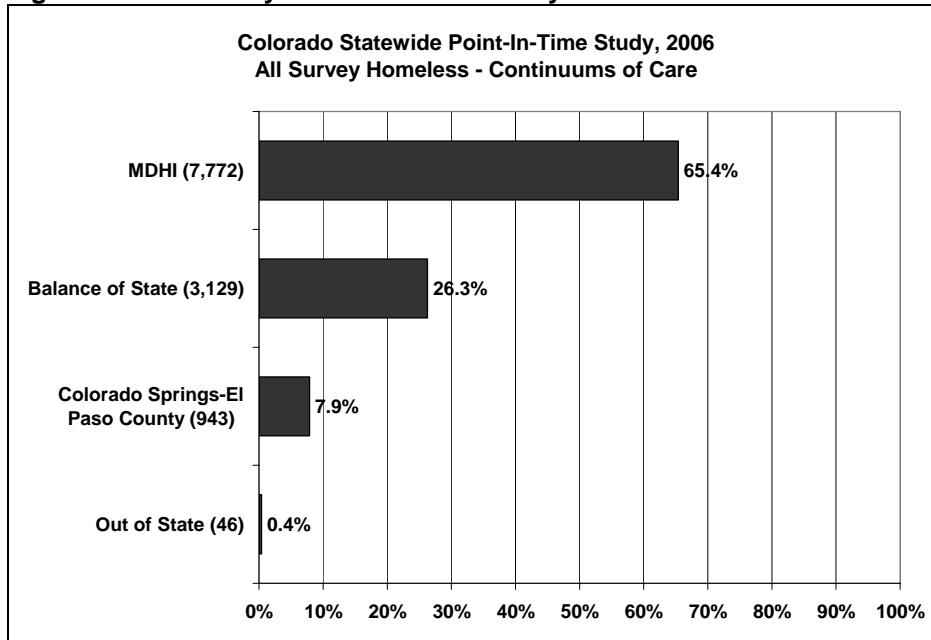
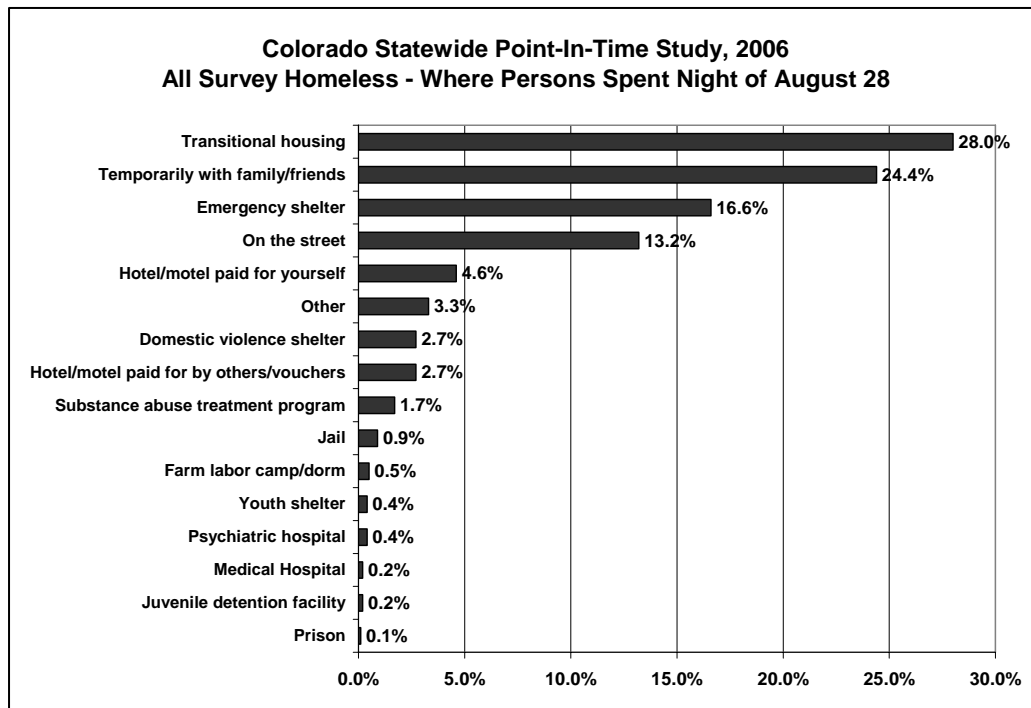


Figure 31. All Survey Homeless Persons by Region

²⁷ See Part IV Findings by Continuum of Care and Part V, for findings by specific region.

Type Of Place “All Survey Homeless” Spent Monday Night

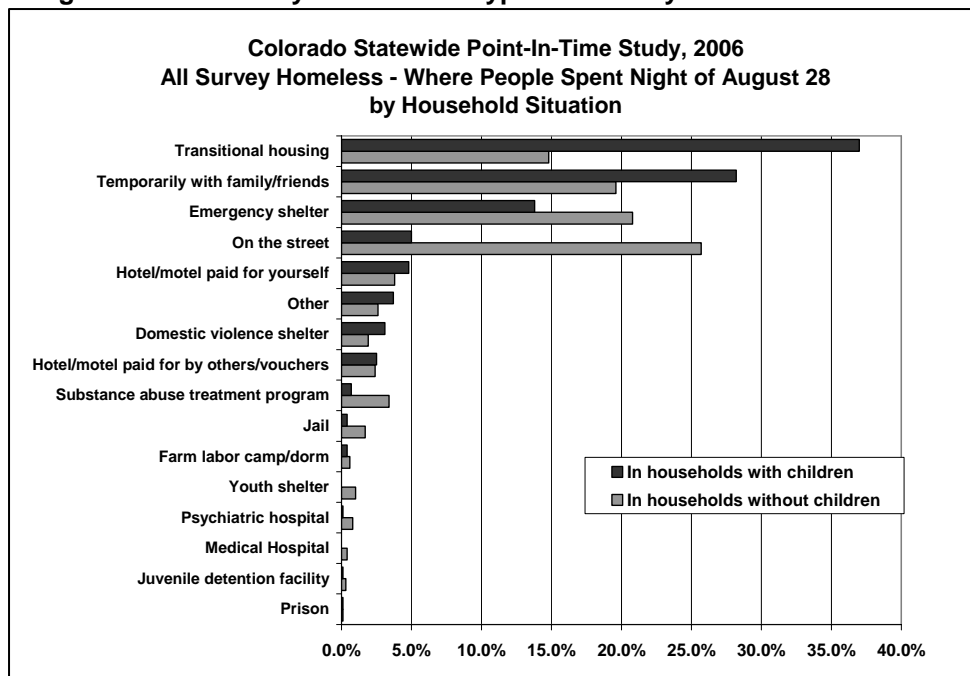
Figure 32. Type of Place, Monday Night



The majority of homeless people in Colorado spent Monday night in transitional housing (28.0%), staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for shelter (24.4%), or in an emergency shelter (16.6%). (Figure 32)

Figure 33. All Survey Homeless – Type of Place by Household Situation

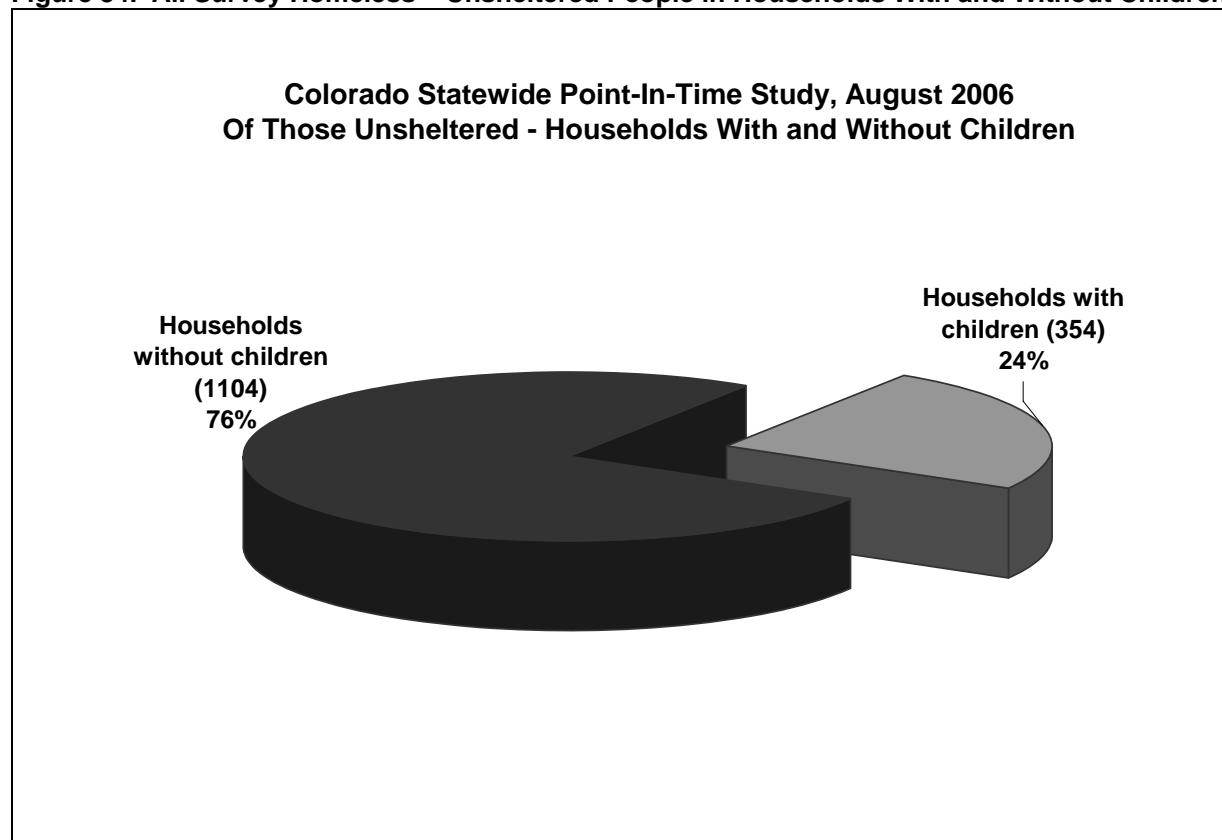
There were dramatic differences in where people in households with and without children spent Monday night. People in households with children far outnumbered those without children in transitional housing, while many more people in households without children were sleeping on the street. A greater number of people in households with children were staying temporarily with family and friends. Persons in households without children were more likely to be staying in an emergency shelter, in a substance abuse treatment program, or in jail. (Figure 33)



Sheltered vs. Unsheltered by Household Category for “All Survey Homeless”

Thirteen percent (13.2%) of all survey homeless people were unsheltered (living on the street, under a bridge, in an abandoned or public building, in a car, traveling on a bus, camping out, etc.). One-quarter (24.3%) of all unsheltered homeless are people in families with children. (Figure 34)

Figure 34. All Survey Homeless – Unsheltered People in Households With and Without Children



Newly Homeless for “All Survey Homeless”

For the purpose of this study, people were considered “newly homeless” if this was their first episode of homelessness and they had been homeless for less than one year. Nearly one-quarter of all survey homeless persons (23.5%, or 2,797), were considered newly homeless. Most (70.8%) of the newly homeless were in households with children. (Figure 36.) Single parents comprised almost half (45.0%) of the newly homeless; since females head most single parent families, most newly homeless households were comprised of women and children. (Figure 35.)

Figure 35. Newly Homeless

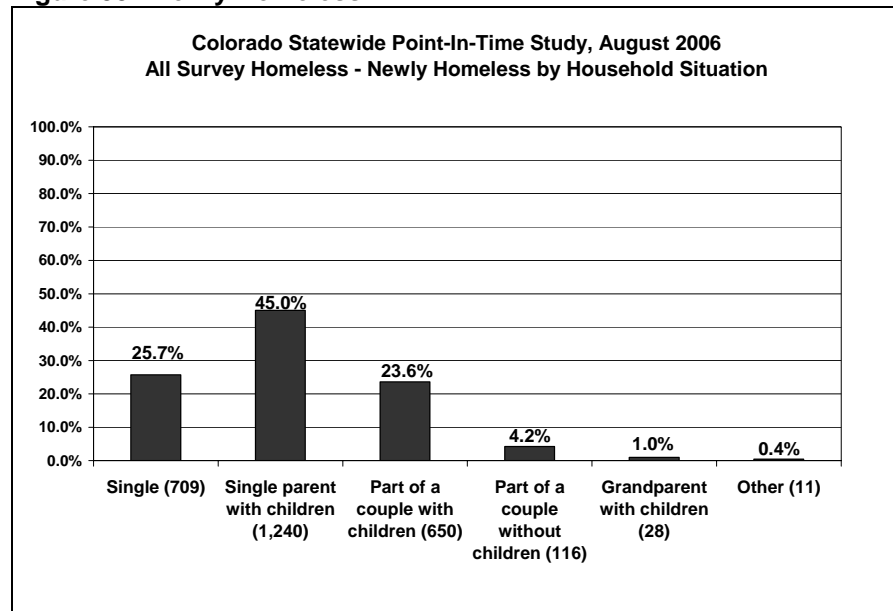
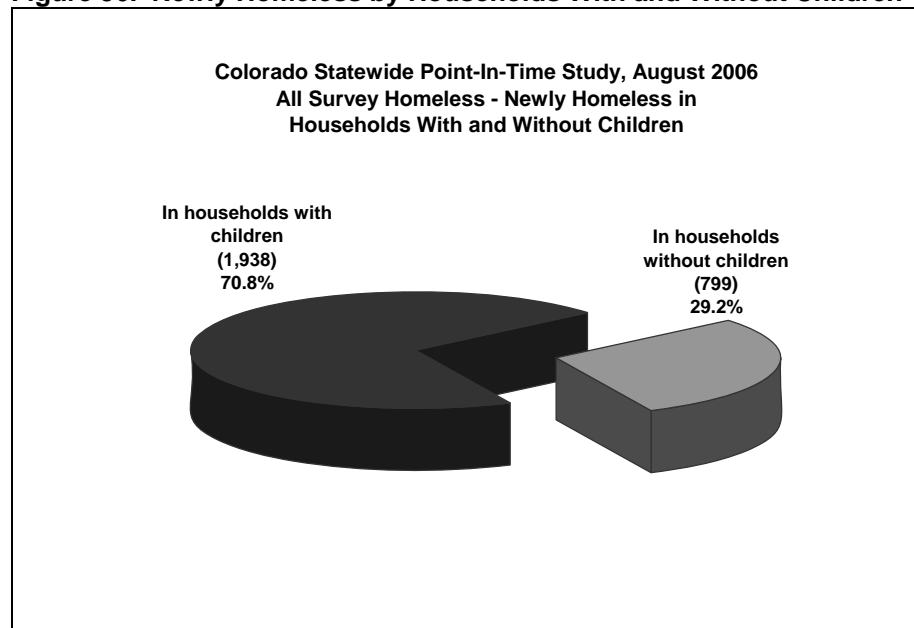


Figure 36. Newly Homeless by Households With and Without Children



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Aggregate Domestic Violence Data

Due to the difficulty in gathering data from domestic violence victims,²⁸ the researchers simply added the number of homeless domestic violence victims (which was reported in aggregate form) to the total number of homeless statewide. (See Appendix 8 for aggregate data). There were a total of 334 domestic violence victims; this includes respondents, their children, and “other” relatives. This number is *not* included in the total *survey* homeless (11,890), but it is added to the statewide estimated number of homeless persons.²⁹

“NOT HOMELESS”

Description of Not Homeless

Researchers identified 1,577 respondents as not homeless. Two-fifths (43.8%) were single. More than one in four (28.7%) were single parents with children, and one in five (19.5%) were part of a couple with children. Not homeless respondents were more likely than homeless respondents to be classified as living in a household with children ages 17 or under (compare 43.6% with 37.3%).

Of not homeless respondents, 56 percent (55.8%) were female and 44 percent (44.2%) were male. In contrast, more homeless respondents (57%) were male. One-third (32.0%) of not homeless respondents considered themselves to be Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, compared to one-quarter (24.9%) of homeless respondents. Approximately 40 percent of both not homeless and homeless respondents were non-white.

The largest group of persons who are not homeless spent the night of Monday, August 28, 2006, in permanent supportive housing (42.7%). One-third (34.2%) reported they stayed “somewhere else”; almost everyone in this group stayed in their own apartment, home or trailer. Fifteen percent (15.0%) stayed with family or friends with an arrangement to stay there permanently; however, research has shown that “couch surfing” is a rising trend and that arrangements to stay with family or friends can be abruptly terminated. Four percent spent the previous night in jail or prison, and 3 percent in a substance abuse treatment program.

The data suggest that many of the “not homeless” respondents are living on the edge of homelessness. Fully 40 percent said they think they have, or have been told they have, at least one of the following serious conditions: serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. Specifically, 20 percent (19.7%) of the not homeless have a serious medical or physical condition, 19 percent (19.1%) have a serious mental illness, and 16 percent (15.9%) reported alcohol or drug abuse.

Almost half (47.0%) of not homeless respondents said that, in the past month, they or another family member needed services that they were unable to obtain. Many needed help with housing-related costs: one-quarter (26.6%) said that they needed rent or utility assistance, 13 percent (12.6%) needed help finding Section 8 or other permanent housing, and 2 percent

²⁸ Confidentiality concerns regarding domestic violence victims arose during the planning phase of the project.

²⁹ Aggregate survey results for domestic violence victims are reported in Appendix 8.

(1.6%) needed emergency shelter. Thirty percent (29.8%) said that they needed food. One-quarter (25.4%) said they needed medical care, 8 percent (8.2%) needed mental health care, and 5 percent (5.0%) needed alcohol or drug abuse treatment.

In comparison, 62.1% of homeless respondents reported that they or their family needed services they could not get. One-quarter (27.5%) of homeless respondents needed rent or utility assistance, two in five (39.2%) needed help finding Section 8 or other permanent housing, and one in five (20.3%) needed emergency shelter. While the proportion of homeless persons needing housing services is higher than the proportion of not homeless, the data indicate that a substantial proportion of not homeless are at risk of losing their housing. A further indication of their risk for homelessness is that almost two in five (38.6%) of the not homeless said that they have been without a permanent place to live at least once in the last three years.

Three-fifths (61.0%) of not homeless respondents reported that they or someone else in their family received money from working since the beginning of the year. Homeless respondents were slightly less likely to report receiving any money from working since the beginning of the year (55.8%).

Three in five (60.9%) of the not homeless rely on government benefits. More than one-third (37.3%) were receiving food stamps, and more than one-quarter (28.4%) were receiving Medicaid or Medicare. One-fifth (20.5%) were receiving SSI/SSDI. Seven percent (6.7%) were receiving TANF.

PART IV CONTINUUMS OF CARE

Part IV reports the total homeless count and survey data for each of the three Continuums of Care.³⁰

MDHI CONTINUUM OF CARE

Total Homeless with Unsheltered Counts:

Table 5. TOTAL HOMELESS – MDHI CONTINUUM	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	4,259
Relatives	3,513
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	7,772
UNSHelterED COUNT ³¹	
Count – Unsheltered	535
SURVEY ESTIMATE ³²	
Additional relatives not fully identified by respondents	587
TOTAL HOMELESS – MDHI	8,894

Survey Data:

There were 4,259 respondents in the MDHI continuum determined to have been homeless on the night of August 28, 2006. Respondents were accompanied by 3,513 family members, for a total of 7,772 persons who were homeless on August 28, 2006.

MDHI's winter, 2006, annual point-in-time study determined that 5,424 respondents in its seven-county area were homeless. Respondents were accompanied by 3,667 family members, for a total of 9,091 persons who were homeless on January 23, 2006. While there were 1,165 more homeless respondents in the winter than in the summer count, they were accompanied by only 154 more family members. Consistent with the data presented below, these numbers indicate

³⁰ Survey respondents (and their families) were placed into the appropriate Continuum and county based on their response to question 18: "In what county will you/did you spend the night, Monday, August 28, 2006" This information is missing for a total of 56 persons: 27 respondents and the 29 homeless relatives they identified. Because it was not possible to determine Continuum or county for this group, these homeless respondents and their family members are not included in the Continuum or regional analyses.

³¹ Agencies submitted estimates of unsheltered homeless persons, that is, unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted. These estimates identify a total of 175 homeless persons. Combined with all the surveyed homeless and the number of unsheltered homeless who were counted but not surveyed, an estimated **9,069** people were homeless on August 28, 2006.

³² See footnote 4.

that there has been an increase in the proportion of families and a decrease in single respondents.

1. Household Situation

Respondents: A majority (55.8%) of respondents identified themselves as single. About one in three (29.0%) are single parents with children under 18, and 10 percent (9.8%) are part of a couple with children under 18. Five percent (4.5%) were part of a couple without children younger than 18. Overall, 40 percent of MDHI households were households with children under 18. The summer 2006 survey suggests that there has been a very slight increase (about 3%) in the proportion of single parents with children and in the proportion of households with children since winter 2006.

All Survey Homeless: People in households headed by a single parent accounted for the largest group of all survey homeless people, followed by single individuals. The data for all survey homeless provides a stronger indication that the number of single parents increased since winter 2006. (Compare 43.3 percent in summer 2006 with 38.7 percent in winter 2006.) The proportion of single persons decreased during this time period, while the proportion of persons who were part of a couple with children remained unchanged. In summer, 2006, almost two-thirds (64.9%) of all homeless were in families with children, compared to 58 percent in winter 2006.

2. Respondent Characteristics

Respondents: While respondents ranged in age from school age to seniors, most (77.4%) were adults, ages 26-64. One-fifth (19.8%) were young adults. Given the difference in how age categories are defined³³, the decrease in number of homeless teens (age 13-17) and increase in number of homeless young adults (age 18-25) since winter, 2006, probably does NOT reflect a real change in ages of homeless teens.

Males outnumbered females: 54.7 versus 45.3 percent. In winter 2006, males outnumbered females by slightly less (53% compared to 47%). Single people continued to be predominantly male. In contrast, females continued to be much more likely than males to head single-parent families.

One-quarter (24.3%) identified as Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. Nearly half (45.7%) were minority. Compared to the general population of Metro Denver, whites were under-represented and minorities were over-represented among the homeless. This is similar to the pattern reported in winter 2006.

Fourteen percent (14.4%) said they had served in the U.S. military. The same proportion (14.9%) reported being in foster care or another type of out-of-home placement at some time as a child or youth. In winter 2006, slightly more respondents had served in the U.S. military or been in foster care.

Three percent (3.2%) of respondents said that they were seasonal resort workers, and 2 percent (2.2%) were seasonal or year-round farm workers.

³³ Prior to summer, 2006, the "teen" category included persons age 13-19 and "young adults" were persons age 20-25. In order to be consistent with HUD's definition of children as age 17 and younger, for summer, 2006, we revised the "teen" category to include persons age 13-17, and "young adults" to consist of persons age 18-25.

3. Last Permanent Residence

Respondents: Respondents were asked to indicate the county where they had their last permanent residence before they became homeless. The largest percentage of respondents – 28.6 percent — said their last permanent residence was in Denver. Nearly as many respondents (26.5%) said that their last permanent residence was located outside Colorado. Sixteen percent (15.5%) named Adams County and 11 percent (11.4%) named Boulder County as their last permanent residence.

In winter 2006, the largest group of respondents also said that their last permanent residence was in Denver, but the proportion – 41.6 percent — was considerably larger than in summer 2006. Winter homeless respondents were substantially less likely (9.3%) than summer homeless respondents (26.5%) to say that their last permanent residence was outside the state of Colorado.

4. Type of Place

All Survey Homeless: On August 28, 2006, the majority of all survey homeless people were in time-limited transitional housing (31.0%), staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for shelter (23.1%), or staying in an emergency shelter (18.7%). One in ten (10.0%) were unsheltered. This pattern was similar to that reported in winter 2006. It is important to note, however, that the proportion of all unsheltered homeless increased from 7.0 percent in winter 2006 to 10 percent in summer, 2006. This may reflect the greater need to seek shelter in cold weather.

5. Reasons for Homelessness

Respondents: Respondents were asked to indicate “all that apply” from a list of possible reasons for becoming homeless at the time of the summer survey. The two most frequently cited reasons for homelessness were “lost job/can’t find work” (26.6%) and “housing costs too high” (26.7%); each was checked by more than one in four respondents. Relationship or family break-up was next in frequency, followed closely by “utility costs too high,” substance abuse problems, and “have work but wages are too low.”

Twice as many respondents in households with children (40.7%) than in households without children (20.1%) reported high housing costs as a reason for their current spell of homelessness. Similarly, respondents in households with children were substantially more likely to say that utility costs are too high (26.5% versus 10.4%). They also were more likely to report eviction or foreclosure as a reason for homelessness.

Looking at the total who reported each reason for homelessness, respondents who named losing a job as a reason for their homelessness were substantially more likely to be in households without children (65%) as opposed to households with children (36%). This is virtually unchanged since winter 2006. Likewise, a much higher percentage reporting substance abuse, medical problems and mental illness as reasons for their homelessness continued to be respondents in households without children.

In contrast, since the winter 2006 MDHI survey, there has been a fairly dramatic change in the household situation of respondents reporting housing-related expenses as a reason for homelessness. In winter 2006, an almost identical number of respondents in households with

and without children reported housing costs; in summer 2006, of those who report housing costs as a reason for homelessness, 57.7 percent were respondents in households with children, as compared to 42.3 percent in households without children. In winter 2006, a slightly higher percentage of those reporting inability to pay utilities as a reason for their homelessness were in households with children (53% compared to 47%). In summer 2006, almost two-thirds (63.2%) citing utility costs were in households with children. These data suggest that inability to pay for housing-related costs has increased more rapidly for families with children than for those without.

One other difference between winter and summer results is worth noting. In winter 2006, the proportion reporting that abuse or violence in their home was a reason for their homelessness was minimally higher for respondents in households with children. In summer 2006, nearly three in five (58.8%) of those citing this reason for homelessness were in households with children.

6. Disabling Conditions

Respondents: Nearly half of respondents (49.0%) reported having at least one of the following serious conditions: serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. Specifically, one-quarter (25.3%) of respondents reported a substance abuse problem. One in five had a serious mental illness (21.0%), and 18 percent (18.1%) had a serious medical or physical condition.

While these were the three most frequently reported conditions in winter 2006, there was one important difference: the proportion with a substance abuse problem increased from 15.4 percent in winter 2006 to 25.3 percent in summer 2006.

Similar to winter 2006, single people and respondents in households without children were substantially more likely to have at least one of the five disabling conditions. Seven in ten (70.0%) single persons and three-quarters (75.2%) of respondents in households without children said they had at least one of the listed conditions.

7. Sources of Income/Government Benefits

Respondents: Respondents' sources of income included both employment and government benefits. Slightly more than half of respondents (53.3%) said that their family had some income from employment since the beginning of the year. Half (51.2%) said that their family was receiving at least one government benefit. One-third (32.2%) were food stamps recipients. One in five (19.6%) were on Medicaid/Medicare, 13 percent (13.3%) were receiving SSI or SSDI, and 10 percent (10.0%) received TANF benefits. The pattern was similar in winter 2006, but a greater proportion of summer homeless respondents reported receiving food stamps, Medicaid/Medicare, and TANF.

8. Needed Services

Respondents: Respondents were asked what services they needed in the past month that they were unable to obtain. Three in five (60.6%) respondents said that they needed at least one service that they could not get. Specifically, more than one-fifth (22.9%) said they needed one

service, 13 percent (13.1%) needed two services, 8 percent (8.2%) needed three services, and 16 percent (16.4%) said that they needed 4 or more services that they were unable to obtain.

More than half needed housing-related services: one in four (24.5%) said they needed help finding Section 8 and other permanent housing, 15 percent (15.1%) needed rent or utility assistance, and 12 percent (12.2%) needed emergency shelter.³⁴

Slightly less than one in five (18.1%) said they needed help finding a job, and the same proportion (17.8%) needed transportation/bus passes. Approximately 15 percent said they needed food, dental care and medical care.

The winter MDHI 2006 survey used a somewhat different list of services than the current survey, so results cannot be compared directly. In winter 2006, the most frequently needed services were transportation/bus passes, permanent housing, help finding a job, dental care, and housing vouchers.

9. Duration and Episodes of Homelessness

Respondents:

Duration: More than one in ten (13.7%) homeless respondents in this study said that they had been without a permanent place to stay for less than a month. The greatest number of respondents (48.4%) had been homeless for more than one month but less than one year. Almost one in five (19.1%) had been homeless for one to three years, and 11 percent had been homeless for more than three years.

Also consistent with the winter MDHI 2006 survey, men and women followed a similar pattern of length of homelessness, although men were more likely to have been homeless for more than three years, as were respondents in households without children.

Episodes: Respondents were asked: “Including now, what is the total number of times you have been without a permanent place to live in the last three years? Based on responses to this question, one in three (32.8%) were experiencing their first episode of homelessness in the last three years on the night of August 28. A similar proportion (32.2%) had been homeless three or more times in the last three years.

In winter 2006, respondents were asked to record the total number of times they had been without a permanent place to live. Unlike the summer 2006 question, the time- period was not limited to the last three years. Probably because of this difference, the proportion of respondents who were newly homeless (in the past three years) in summer 2006, is higher than the one in four (24.5%) respondents who said that they were homeless for the first time ever, in winter 2006.

In summer 2006, men and those in households without children were more likely to be homeless for five or more episodes than were women and respondents in households with

³⁴ In winter 2006, permanent housing and housing vouchers were tallied separately. While approximately 36% of respondents said they needed at least one of these services, these data are not directly comparable to the summer 2006 results. It is likely that summer respondents perceived “Section 8” to be different than permanent housing and, therefore, did not check this response even if they needed permanent housing.

children. In winter 2006, men and respondents in households without children were more likely to experience homelessness for six or more episodes.³⁵

10. Chronically Homeless Individuals

Respondents: As of the night of August 28, 2006, nearly one in ten (9.0%, or 384) respondents were considered “chronically homeless.” The great majority (88.8%) of the chronically homeless were male. These results are consistent with the winter 2006 tallies.

11. Newly Homeless

All Survey Homeless: On August 28, 2006, nearly one in four of all survey homeless persons (1,793, or 23.1%) were considered “newly homeless.” Three-quarters (73.4%) of all newly homeless individuals were in households with children. Single parent families made up half (49.5%) of the newly homeless, and couples with children made up more than one-fifth (21.5%). In winter 2006, single parent families comprised 46.6 percent of the newly homeless.

12. Unsheltered Homeless

All Survey Homeless: There are 771 unsheltered homeless persons, or 10 percent (10.0%) of all survey homeless individuals. Slightly less than one in five (18.1%) are in households with children.

³⁵ In summer, 2006, the question on number of episodes of homeless offered “five or more times” as the highest category; in winter, 2006, the highest category for the comparable question was “six or more times.”

Figure 37. MDHI/Respondents – Household Situation

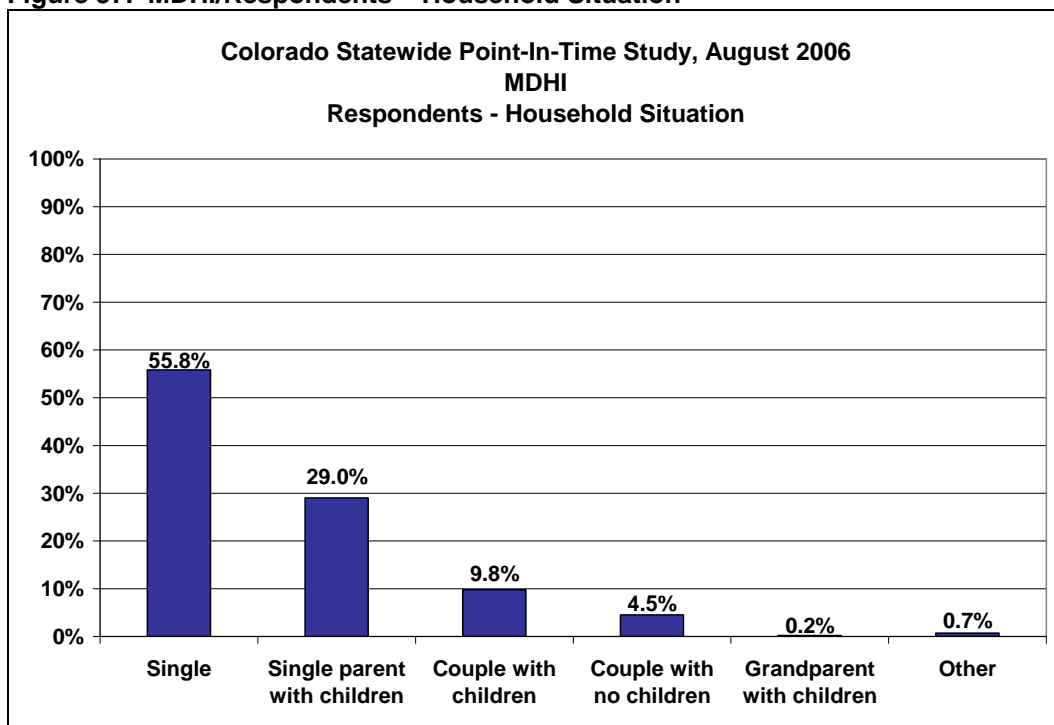


Figure 38. MDHI/Respondents - Households With and Without Children

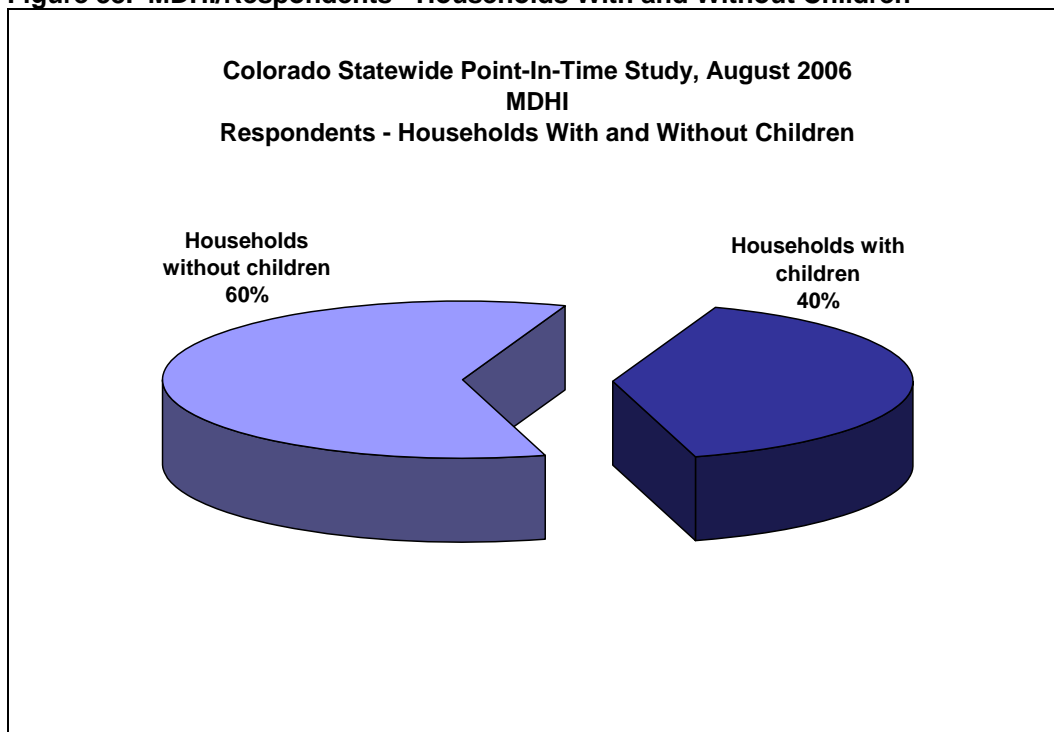


Figure 39. MDHI/All Survey Homeless - Household Situation

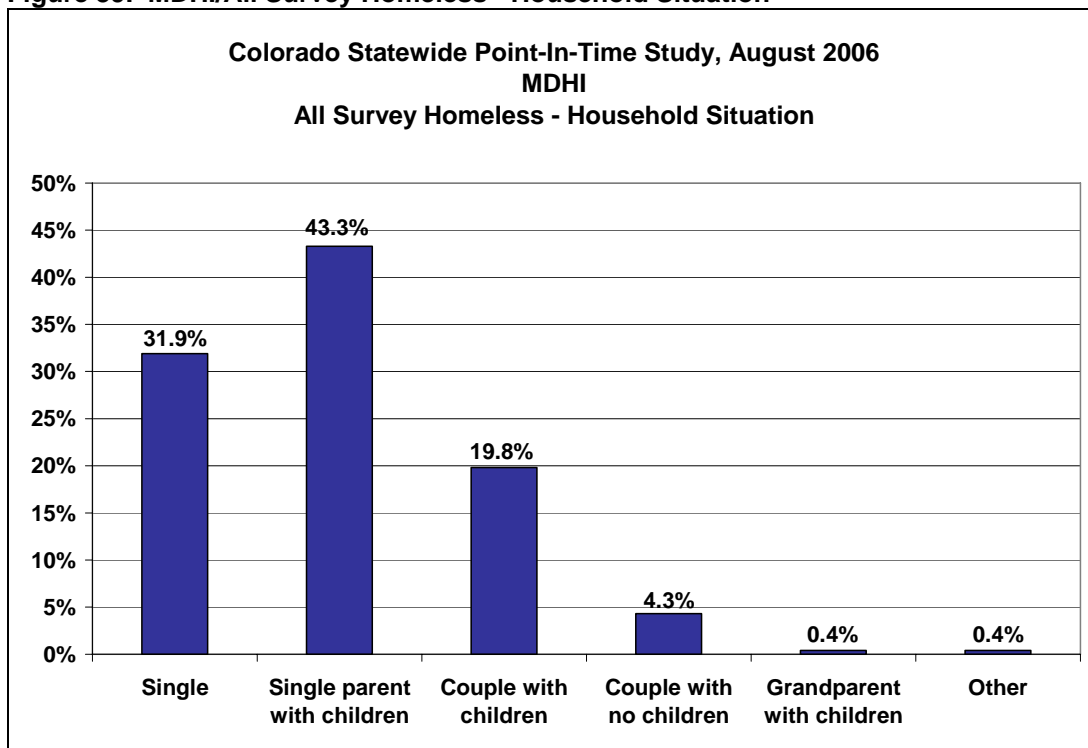


Figure 40. MDHI/All Survey Homeless - People in Households With and Without Children

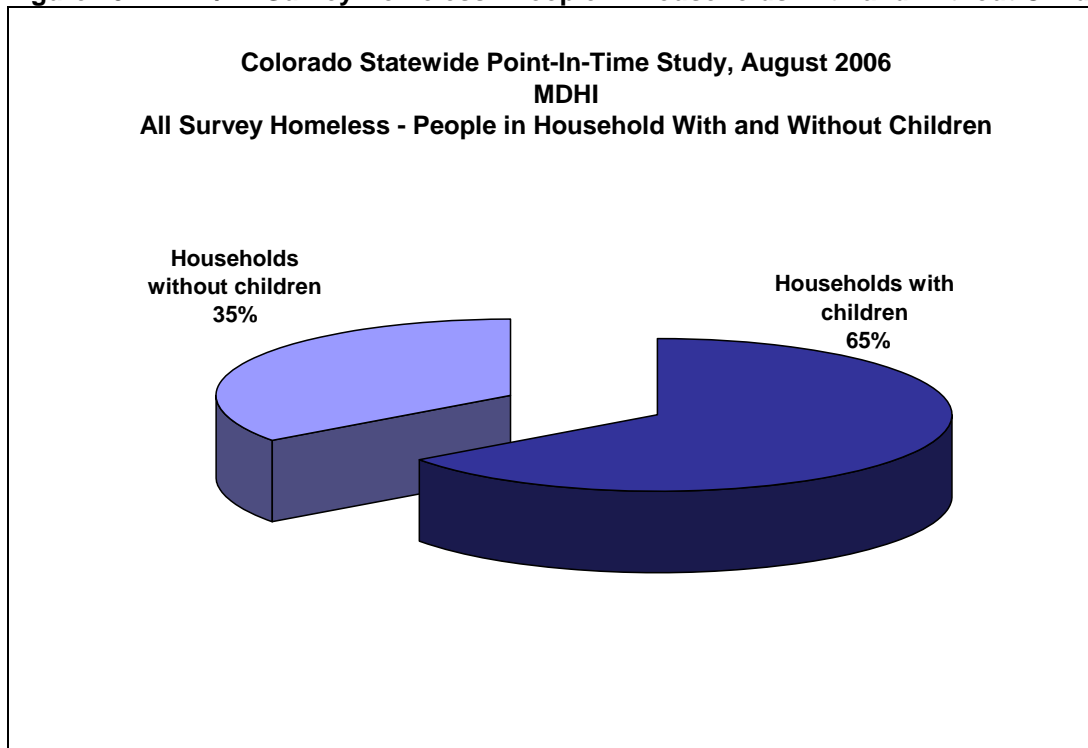


Figure 41. MDHI/Respondents – Age Groups

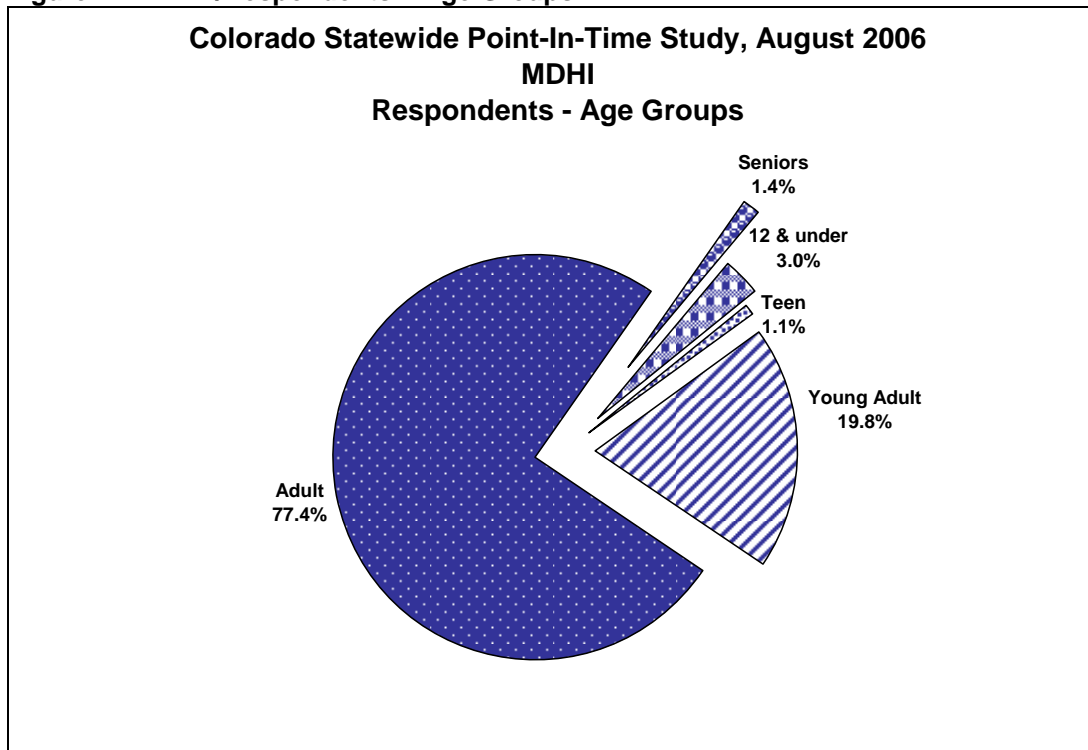


Figure 42. MDHI/All Survey Homeless – Age Groups

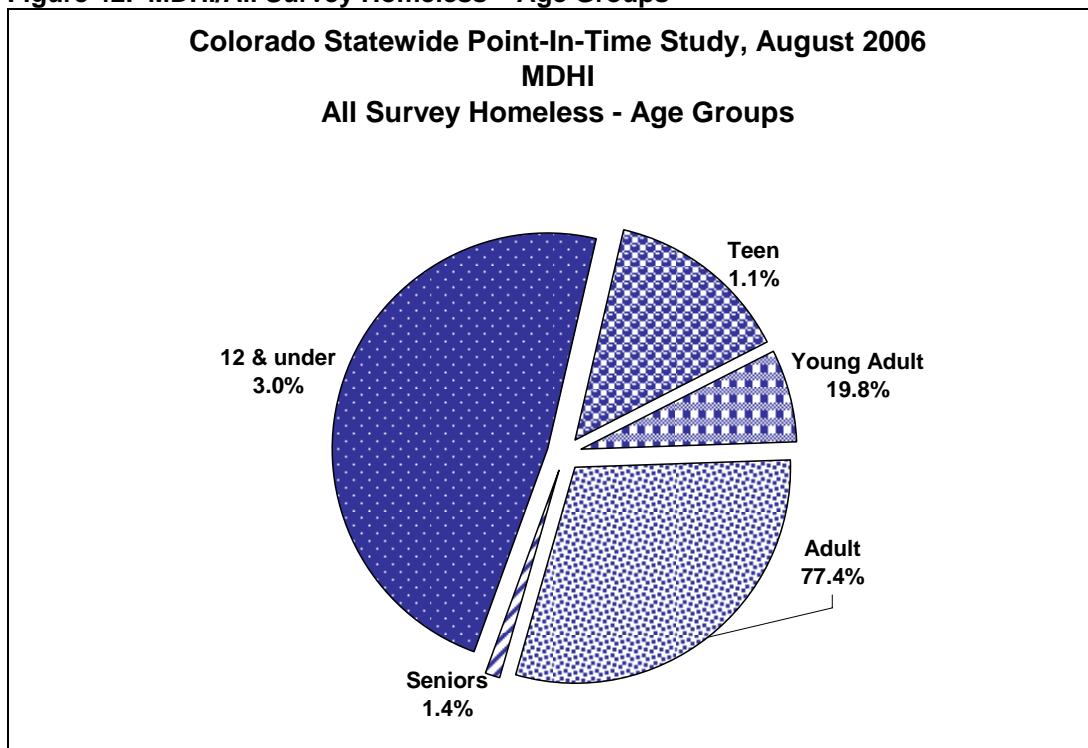


Figure 43 MDHI/Respondents - Gender

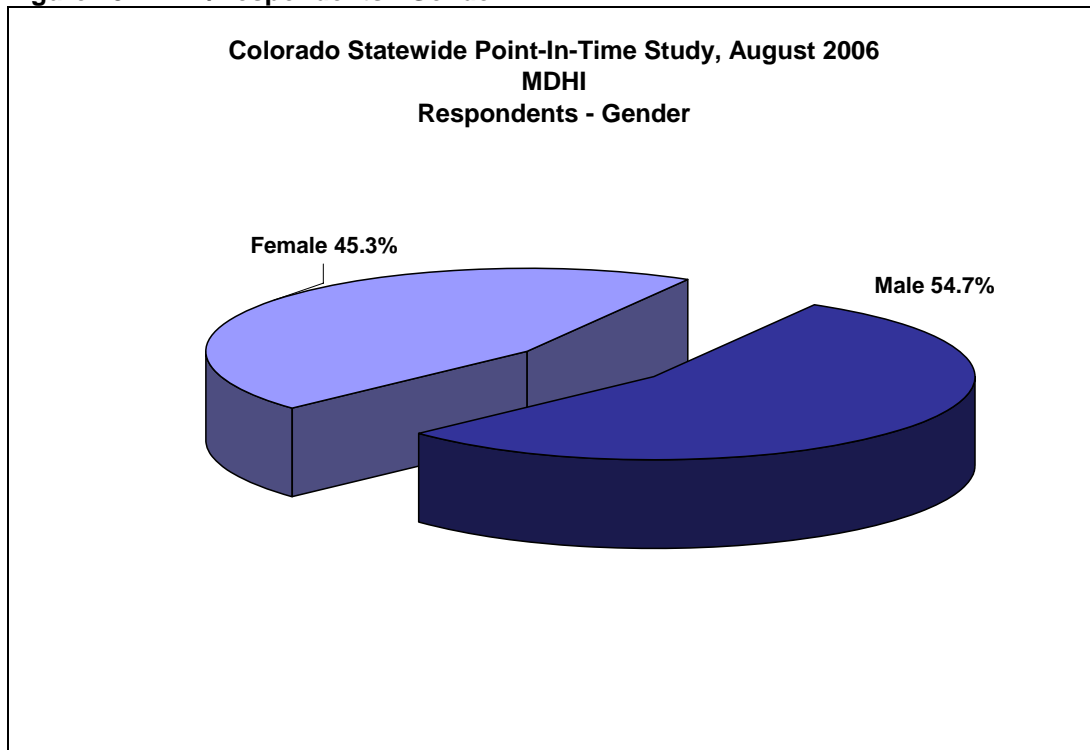


Figure 44. MDHI/Respondents – Race/Ethnicity

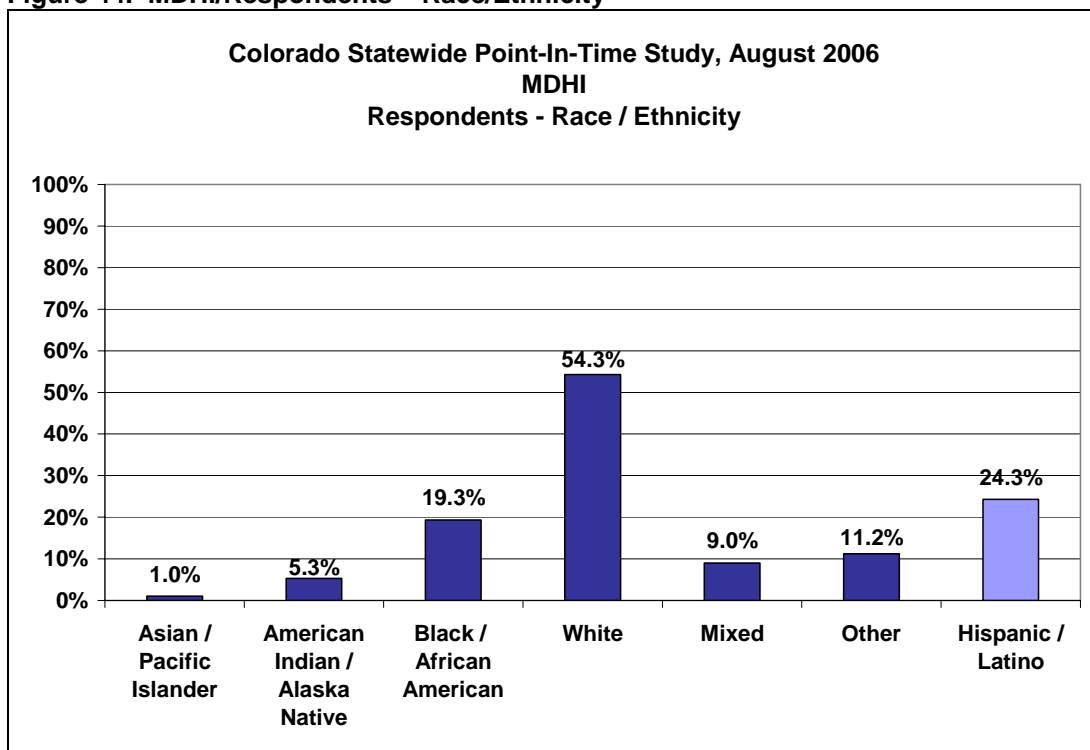


Figure 45. MDHI/Respondents - Military Service, Foster Care, Seasonal, Yr-Round Worker

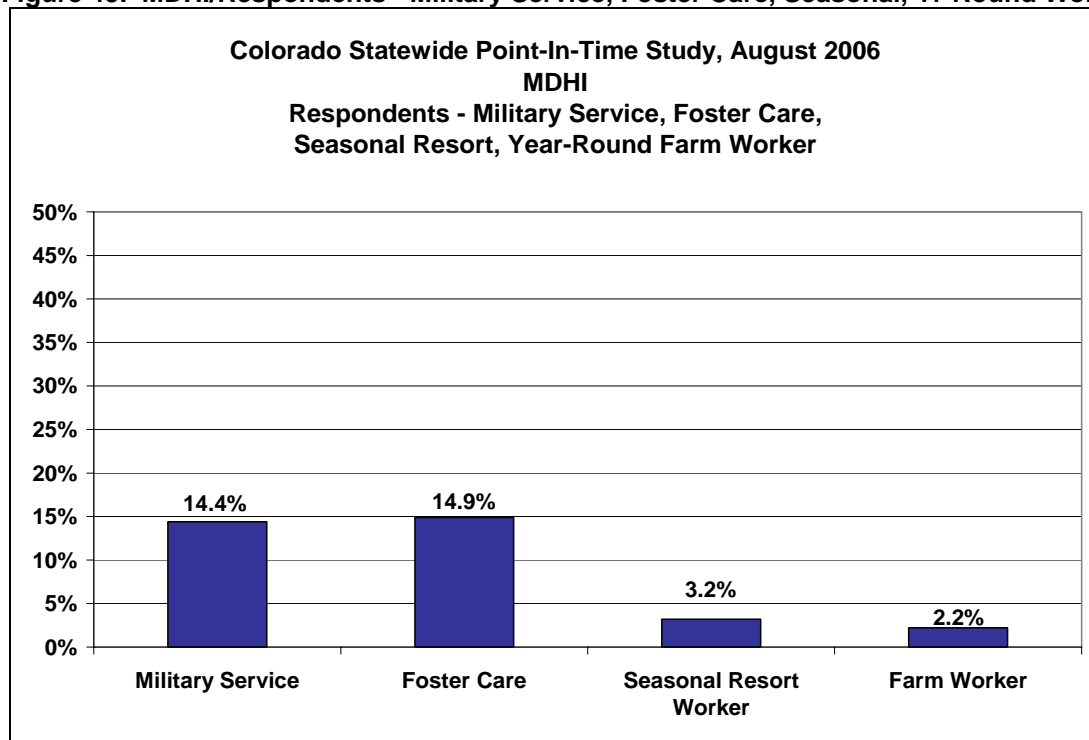


Figure 46. MDHI/All Survey Homeless – Type of Place, Monday Night

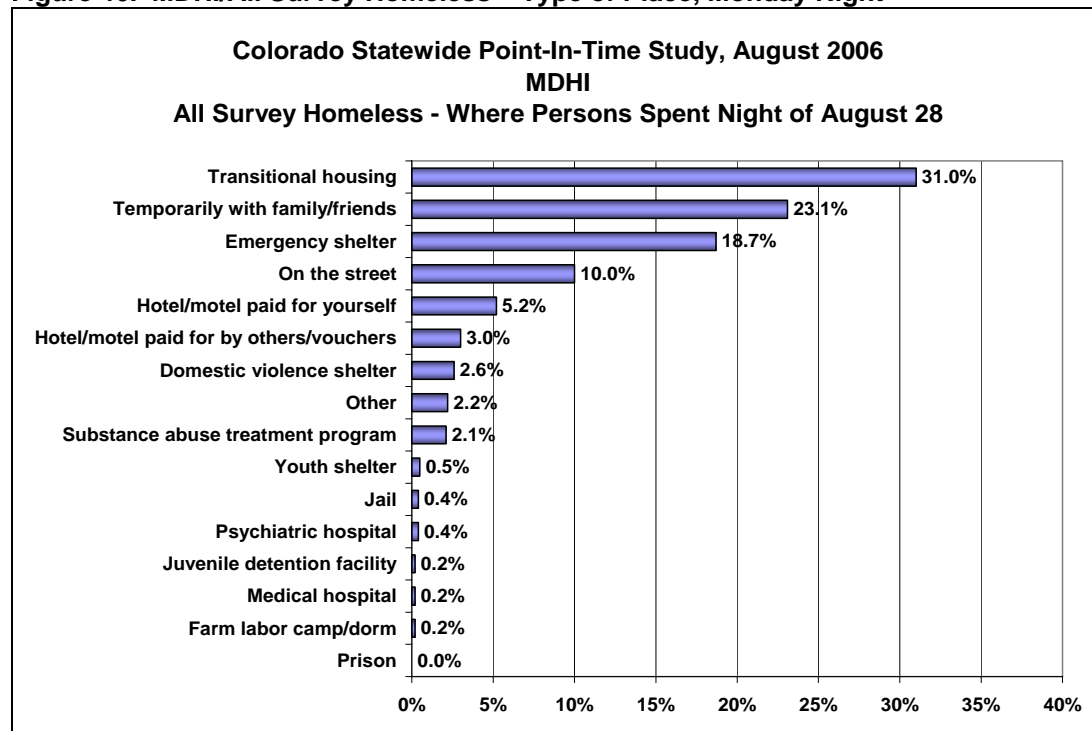


Figure 47. MDHI/Respondents – Reasons for Homelessness

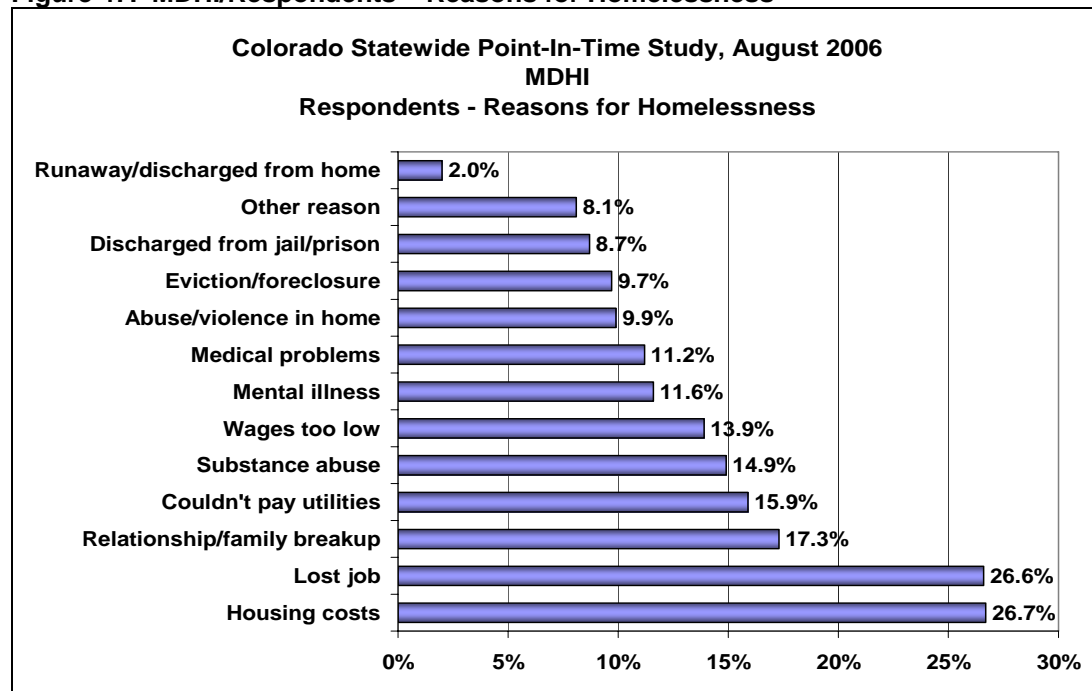


Figure 48. MDHI/Respondents - Disabling Conditions

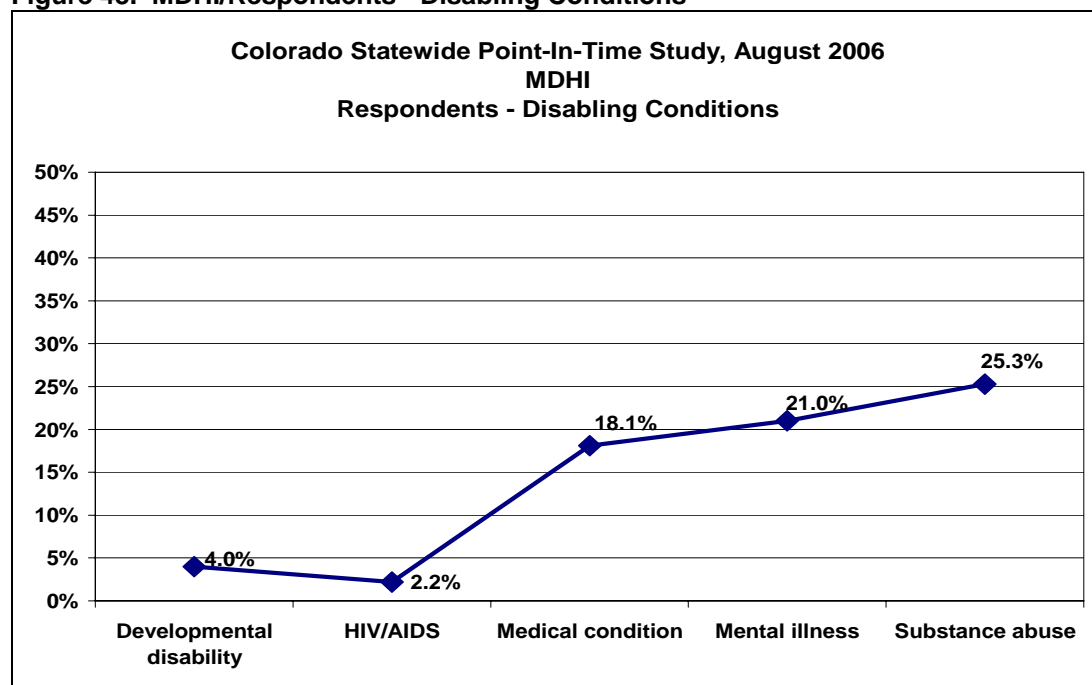


Figure 49. MDHI/Respondents – Money from Work

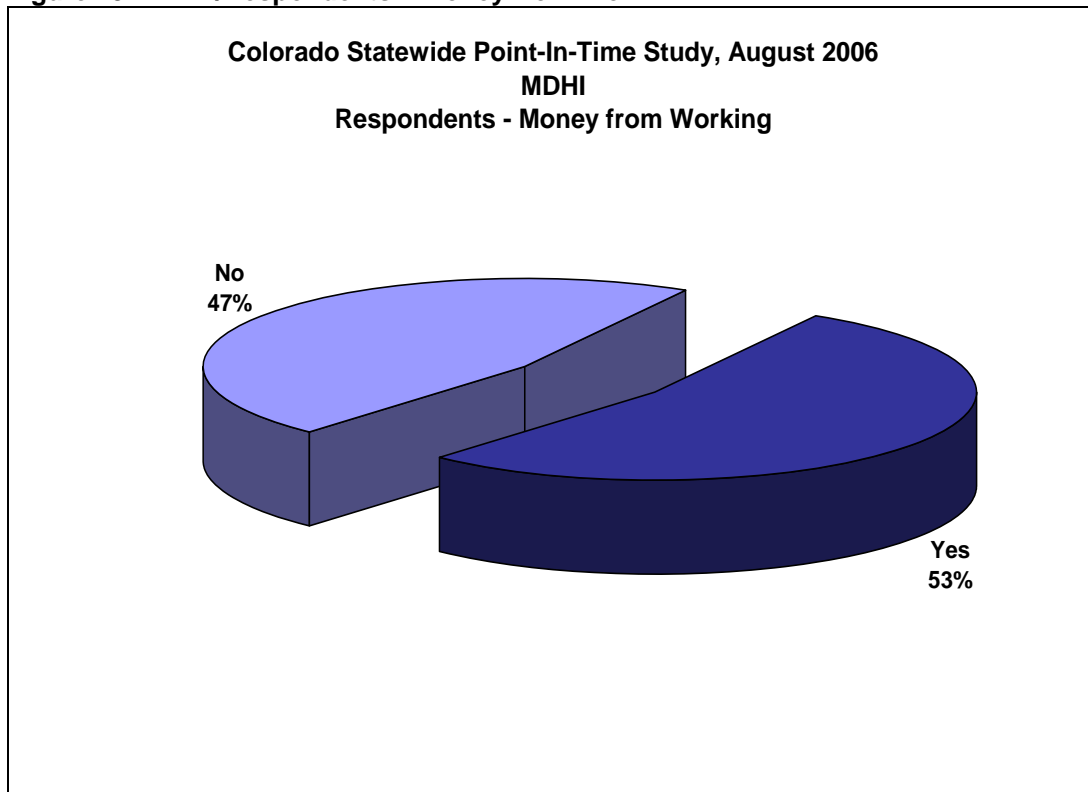


Figure 50. MDHI/Respondents - Government Benefits

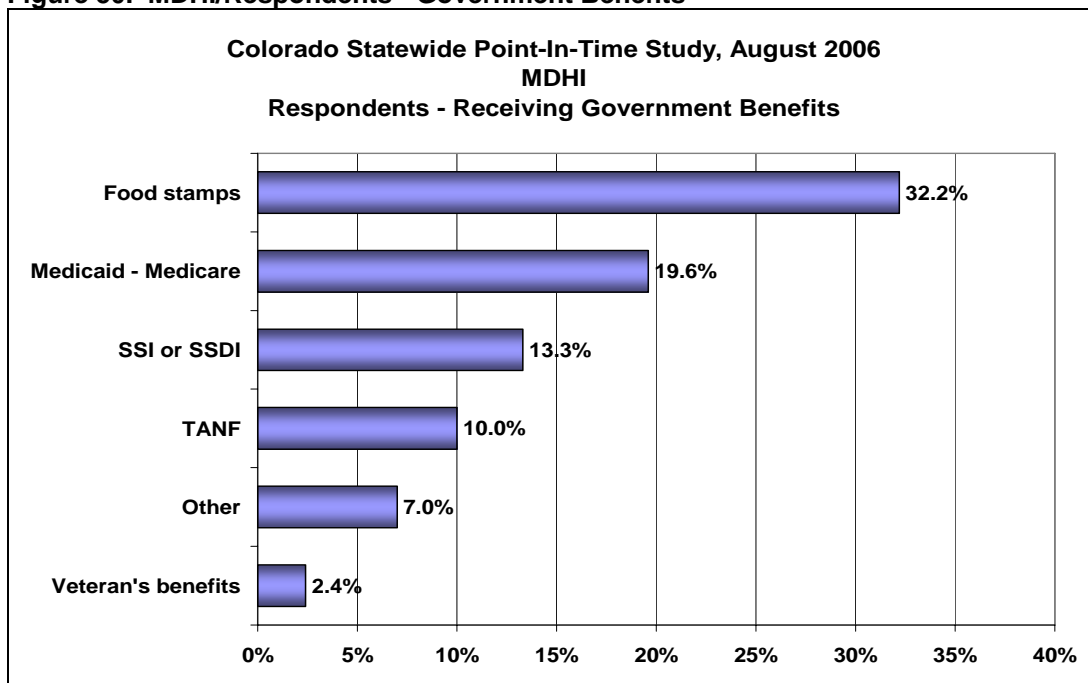


Figure 51. MDHI/Respondents – Needed Services

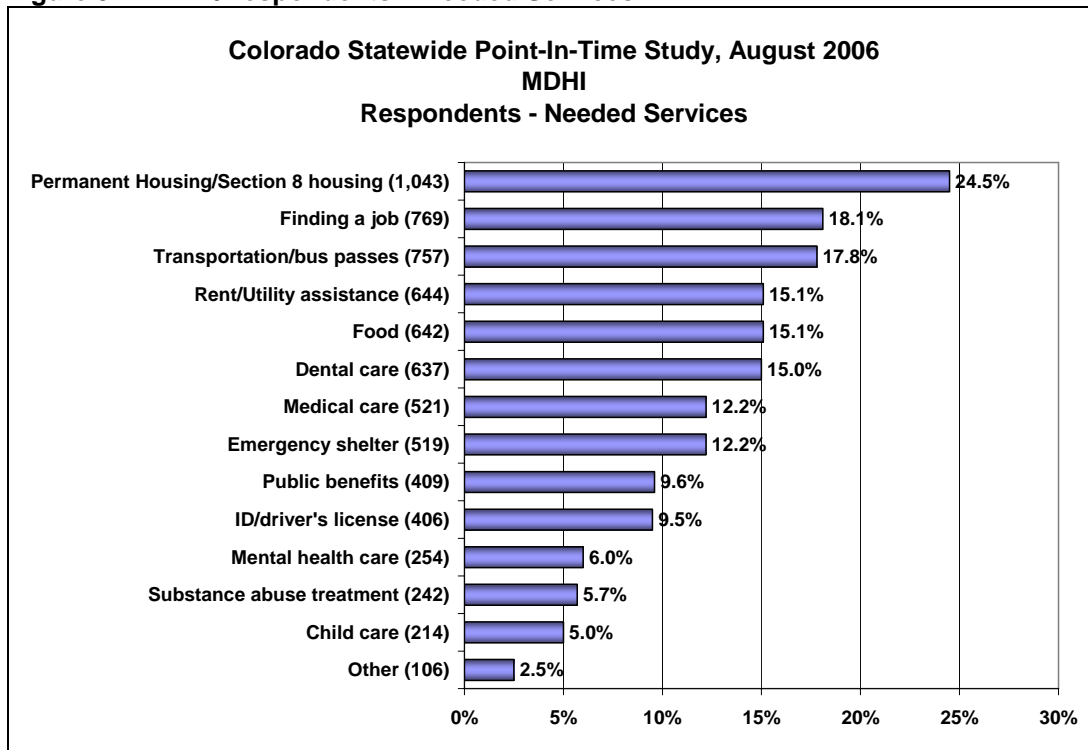


Figure 52. MDHI/Respondents – Chronic Homelessness

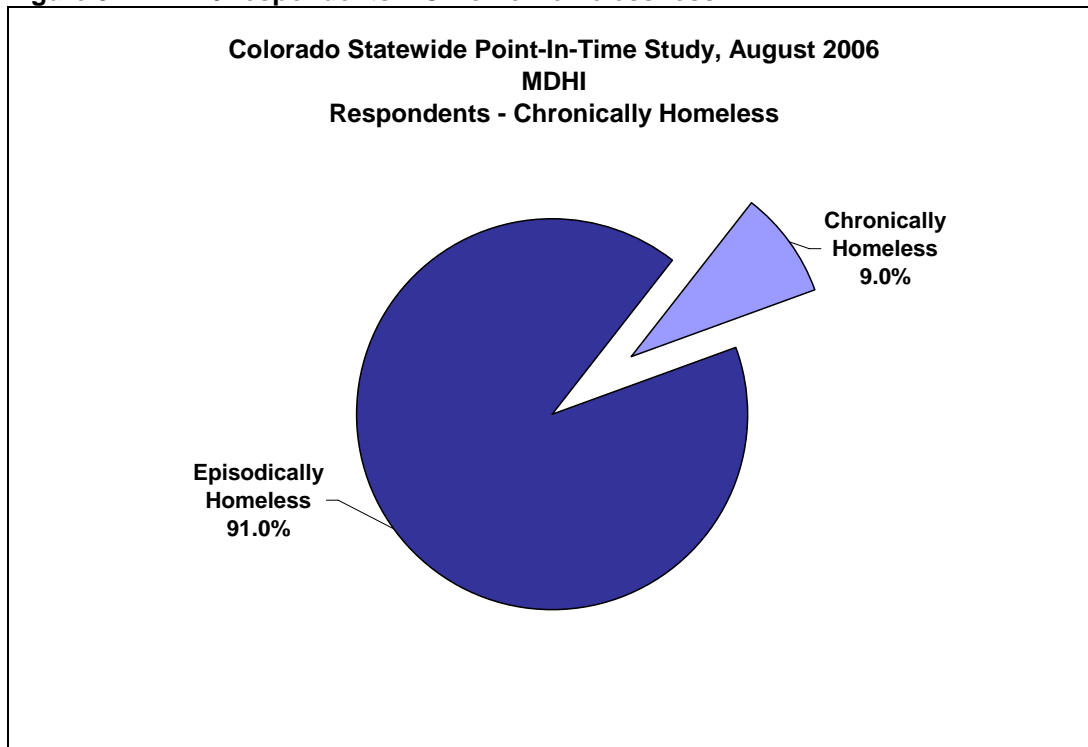


Figure 53. MDHI/All Survey Homeless – Newly Homeless by Household Situation

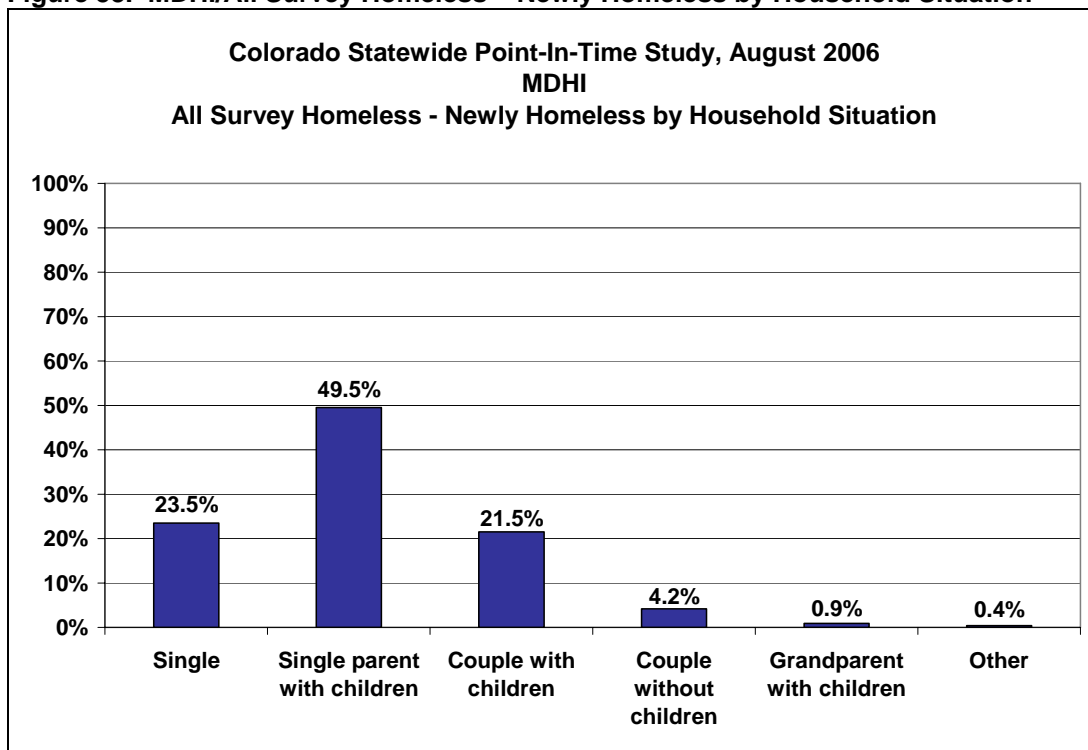


Figure 54. MDHI/All Survey Homeless – Newly Homeless, Households With and Without Children

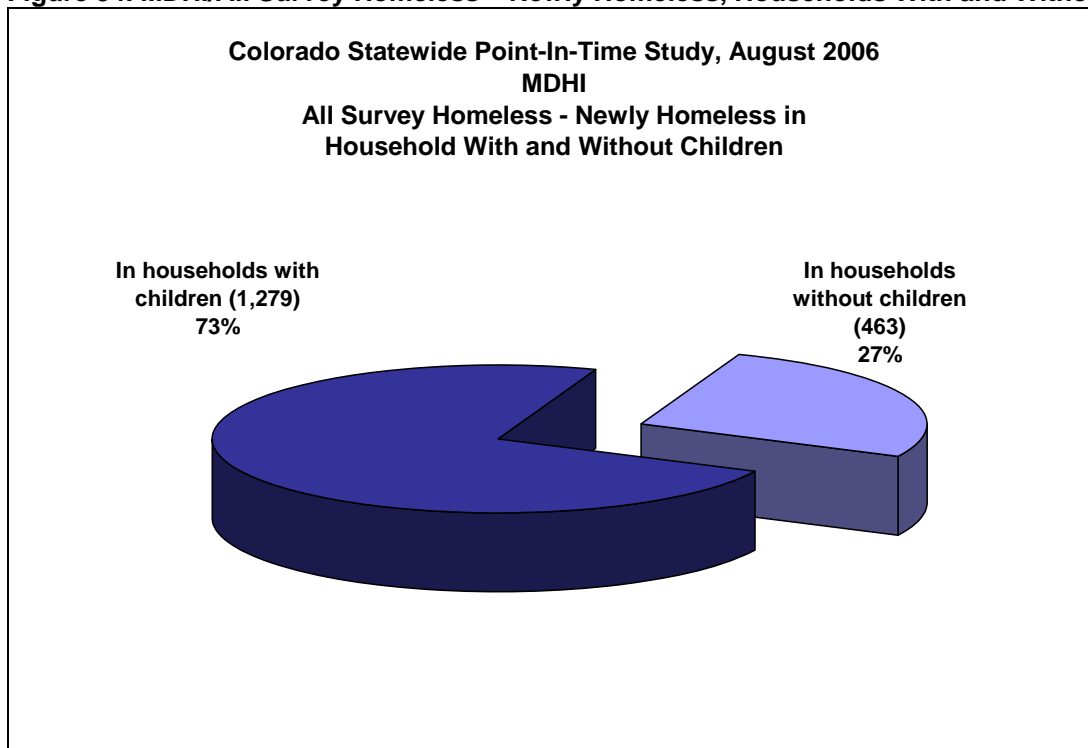
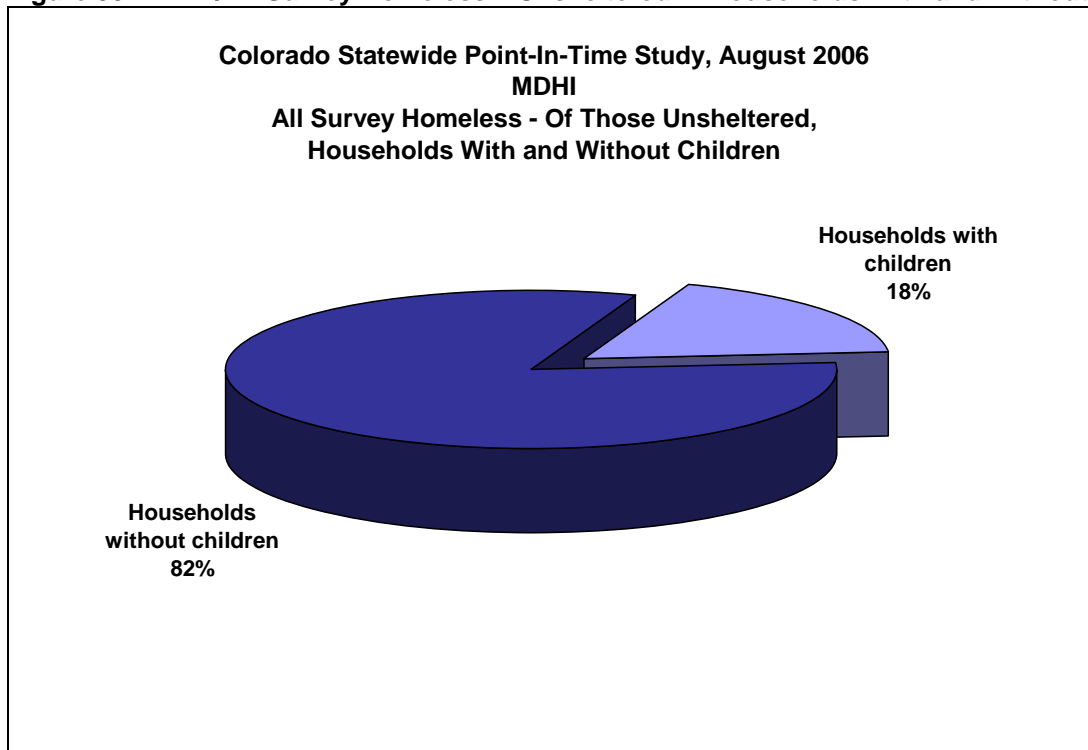


Figure 55. MDHI/All Survey Homeless – Unsheltered in Households With and Without Children



EL PASO/COLORADO SPRINGS CONTINUUM OF CARE

Total Homeless with Unsheltered Counts/Estimates:

Table 6. TOTAL HOMELESS – EL PASO/COLORADO SPRINGS CONTINUUM	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	632
Relatives	311
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	943
UNSHELTERED COUNT ³⁶	
Count – Unsheltered	118
SURVEY ESTIMATE ³⁷	
Additional relatives not fully identified by respondents	75
TOTAL HOMELESS – EL PASO/COLO SPGS	1,136

Survey Data:

There were 632 respondents in the El Paso Continuum determined to have been homeless on the night of August 28, 2006. Respondents were accompanied by 311 family members, for a total of 943 persons who were homeless on August 28, 2006.

1. Household Situation

Respondents: A majority (71.3%) of respondents identified themselves as single. Thirteen percent (13.3%) were single parents with children under 18, and 9 percent (8.9%) were part of a couple with children under 18. Six percent (5.8%) were part of a couple without children under 18. Overall, 23 percent (22.5%) of households were households with children under 18.

All Survey Homeless: Single individuals accounted for half (49.5%) of all survey homeless persons. Single parent households were second in prevalence, with more than one-quarter (26.1%) of all survey homeless. Forty-five percent (44.6%) of all survey homeless individuals were in families with children.

³⁶ There is no estimate of the unsheltered homeless for the El Paso/Colorado Springs Continuum, that is, of the number of unsheltered individuals and families who were not counted

³⁷ See footnote 4.

2. Respondent Characteristics

Respondents: While respondents ranged in age from teenage to seniors, the great majority (82.8%) were adults, ages 26-64. Fifteen percent (14.7%) were young adults. Seniors and teens each comprised only 1 percent of homeless respondents.

Males substantially outnumbered females: 63.5 percent versus 36.5 percent. Single people were three times as likely to be male as female: 75.1 percent compared to 24.9 percent. In contrast, females were much more likely than males to head single-parent families: fully 7 in 8 single parent households were headed by females.

Seventeen percent (16.8%) identified as Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, and slightly more than one-third (35.4%) were minority.

One in five (21.8%) had served in the U.S. military. Slightly fewer (18.5%) reported ever being in foster care or another type of out-of-home placement as a child or youth.

Seven percent (6.6%) were seasonal or year-round farm workers, and 3 percent (2.9%) were seasonal resort workers.

3. Last Permanent Residence

Respondents: Forty percent (39.6%) of respondents said that El Paso County was the last county they considered their permanent place to live. Nine percent (8.8%) said their last permanent place to live was in another Colorado county. Fully half (51.5%) said that their last permanent place to live was outside Colorado. It is conceivable that many of the 178 respondents who did not complete this question last resided in another Colorado county, but were unable to specify the county.

4. Type of Place

All Survey Homeless: On August 28, 2006, the majority of all survey homeless people were in time-limited transitional housing (32.8%), staying in an emergency shelter (17.8%), or staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for shelter (14.4%). Fully 17 percent (17.1%) were unsheltered.

5. Reasons for Homelessness

Respondents: Respondents were asked to indicate “all that apply” from a list of possible reasons for becoming homeless this time. One in three (29.6%) said they were homeless because they lost their job or could not find work. More than one-fifth checked substance abuse problems (22.5%) and relationship or family break-up (20.4%). Fourteen percent (13.9%) said that housing costs were too high, and 11 percent cited eviction or foreclosure (10.8%). Approximately 10 percent said they were homeless because of mental illness (10.8%) or medical problems (10.3%).

Respondents in households with children were slightly more likely (5-6%) than those in households without children to say that high housing and utility costs were reasons for their current spell of homelessness. They were more than twice as likely to report eviction or foreclosure as a reason for homelessness: compare 21.2 percent with 8.7 percent.

A substantially greater percentage of households with children reported abuse/violence in the home as a reason for homelessness than those households without children: 21.2 percent versus 6.7 percent. In contrast, a considerably higher percentage of respondents in households without children reported substance abuse and mental illness as reasons for their homelessness.

6. Disabling Conditions

Respondents: Three in five respondents (59.5%) said that they have, or have been told that they have, at least one of the following serious conditions: serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. Specifically, one in three (34.2%) said that alcohol or drug abuse is a problem. Approximately one in five had a serious mental illness (22.2%), and slightly fewer (20.3%) had a serious medical or physical condition.

The great majority of respondents with at least one disability were single (78.5%) and in households without children (83.8%).

7. Sources of Income/Government Benefits

Respondents: Sixty percent (61.2%) of respondents said that they or someone else in their family received money from working since the beginning of the year. Half (50.5%) said that their family was receiving at least one government benefit. More than one in three (34.8%) said that someone in their family was receiving food stamps. Fourteen percent (14.2%) were receiving Medicaid/Medicare, and 13 percent (12.7%) were receiving SSI or SSDI. Only 5 percent (4.7%) said their family was getting TANF.

8. Needed Services

Respondents: Respondents were asked what services they needed in the past month that they were unable to obtain. Fully two in three respondents (67.9%) said that they needed at least one service that they were not able to get. Specifically one-quarter (25.2%) said they needed one service; 14 percent (14.2%) needed two services; 9 percent (8.9%) needed three services; and, one-fifth (19.5%) said that they needed 4 or more services.

Respondents and their families were most in need of dental (24.2%) and medical (20.7%) care. One in five (19.0%) said they needed help finding a job. Slightly fewer needed help with housing, specifically rent or utility assistance (18.7%) and help finding Section 8 or other permanent housing (17.7%). Respondents and their families also needed help with transportation/bus passes (17.4%), food (16.3%), and getting identification or a driver's license (14.1%).

9. Duration and Episodes of Homelessness

Respondents:

Duration: Respondents were asked: "How long have you been without a permanent place to live this time?" More than one in five (22.8%) said their current spell of homelessness has been less than one month, and nearly half (45.5%) said they had been homeless for more than one

month, but less than one year. Nine percent (9.0%) reported that they have been homeless for more than three years.

One-third (33.1%) of respondents in households with children had been homeless this time for less than one month, compared to one-fifth (20.2%) in households without children. Forty-four percent (43.6%) of those in households without children had been homeless for more than one month and less than one year. In contrast, respondents in households without children were more likely to have been homeless for more than three years: 10.7 percent versus 2.3 percent.

Male respondents were somewhat more likely than females to have been homeless this time for more than three years: 12.9 percent versus 3.3 percent.

Episodes: More than one-third (36.2%) of respondents said that this was the first time they had been without a permanent place to live in the last three years. One-fifth (20.4%) said this was their second spell of homelessness in the last three years. Nearly one in five (17.4%) said that they had been homeless five or more times in the past three years.

Males were somewhat more likely than females to report that they have had five or more spells of homelessness in the last three years: compare 20.2 percent with 14.1 percent.

In general, respondents in households without children have had more episodes of homelessness than those in households with children. Half (51.9%) of respondents in households with children said that this was the first time they have been without a permanent place to live in the last three years, while 9 percent (8.9%) had been homeless five or more times during this period. In contrast, respondents in households without children were less likely to say this was the first time they had been homeless in the past three years (32.5%), and more likely to say they have had five or more spells of homelessness (19.1%) during this period.

10. Chronically Homeless Individuals

Respondents: As of the night of August 28, 2006, 8.4 percent of respondents or 53 individuals were considered chronically homeless. The great majority (90.6%) of the chronically homeless were male.

11. Newly Homeless

All Survey Homeless: On August 28, 2006, 292 people or nearly one-third (31.0%) were considered newly homeless. Single parents with children (37.8%) and single individuals (36.8%) comprised the largest groups of newly homeless, followed by couples with children (22.7%). Three-fifths (60.5%) of all newly homeless individuals were in households with children.

12. Unsheltered Homeless

All Survey Homeless: Seventeen percent (17.1%) of all survey homeless persons were unsheltered. The great majority of unsheltered homeless (79.3%) were in households with children.

Figure 56. El Paso/Respondents – Household Situation

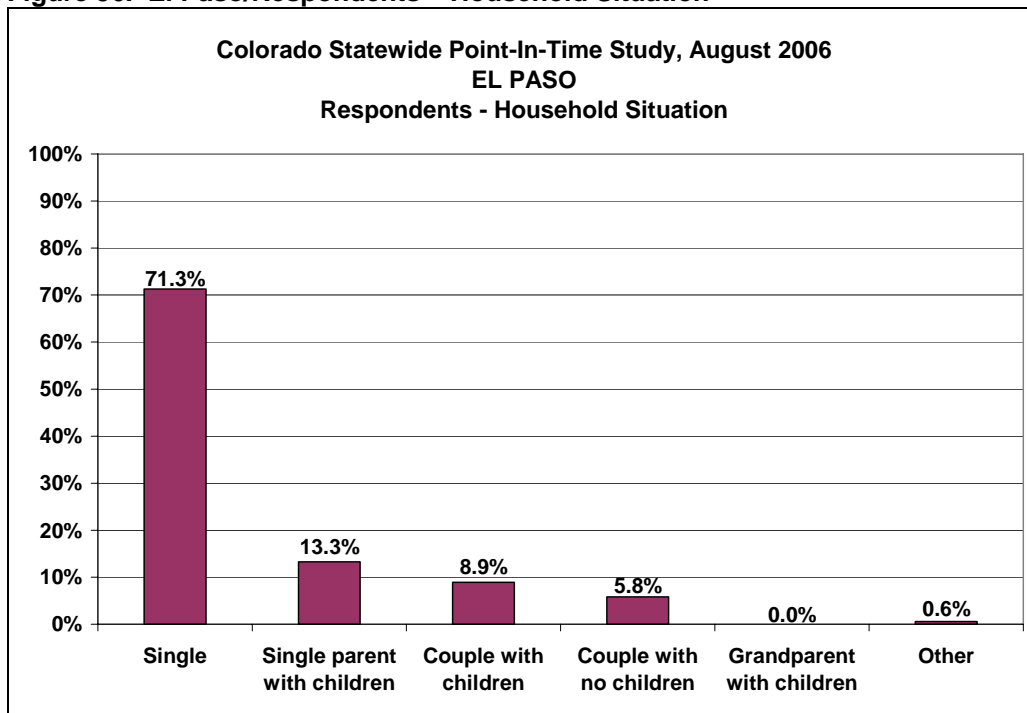


Figure 57. El Paso/Respondents – Households With and Without Children

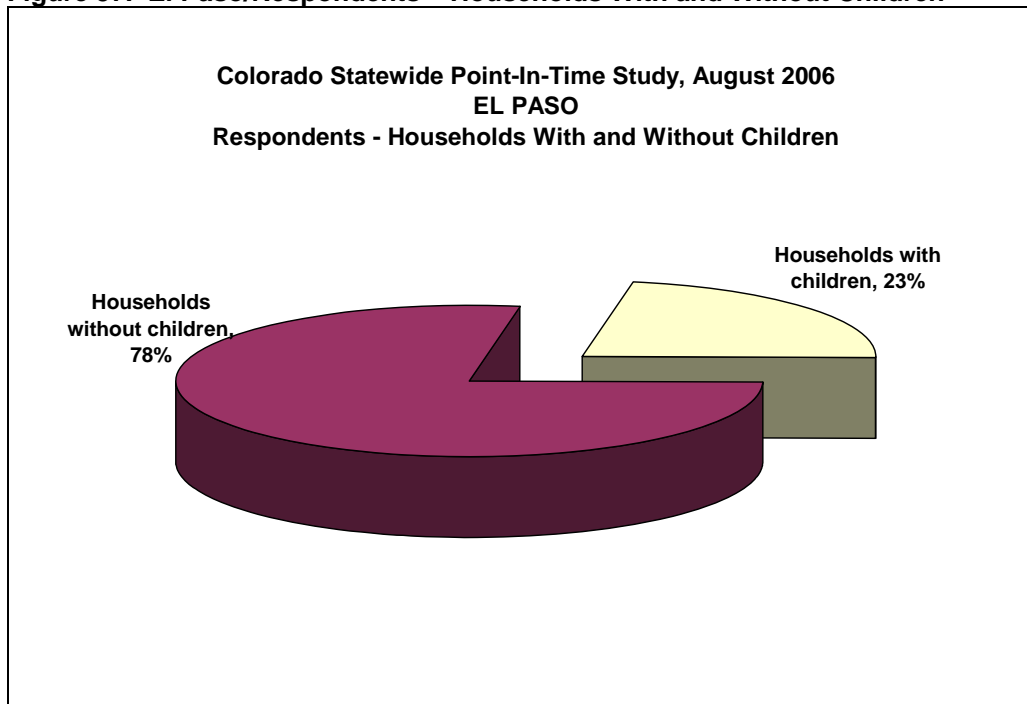


Figure 58. El Paso/All Survey Homeless – Household Situation

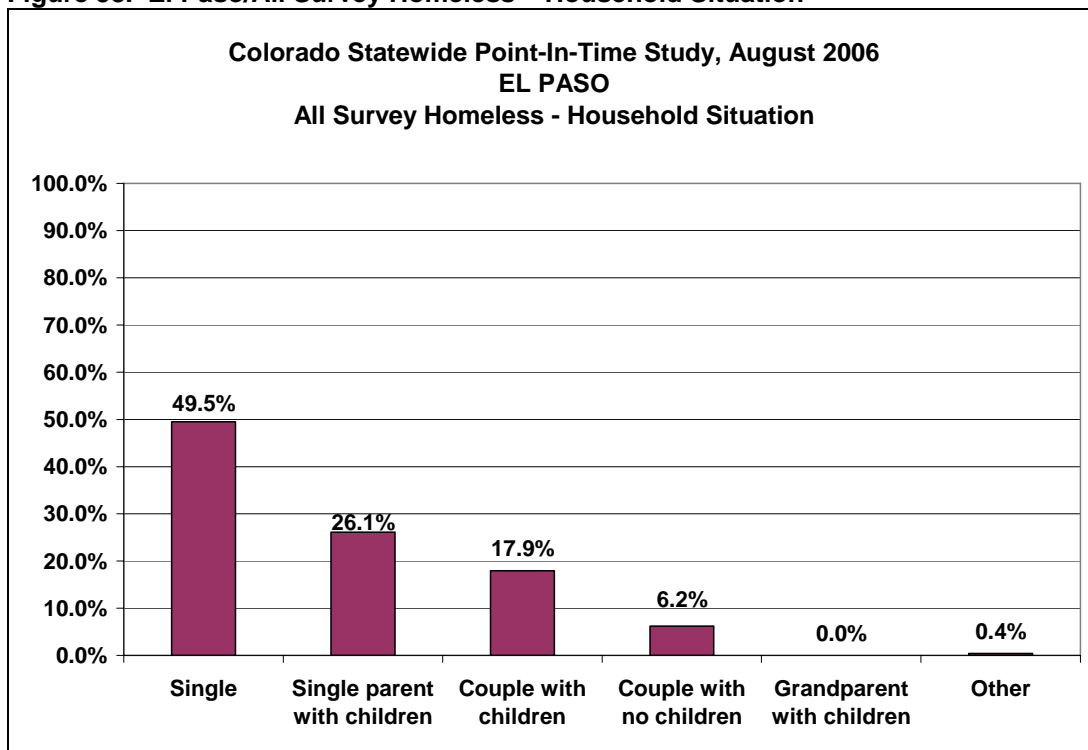


Figure 59. El Paso/All Survey Homeless – People in Households With and Without Children

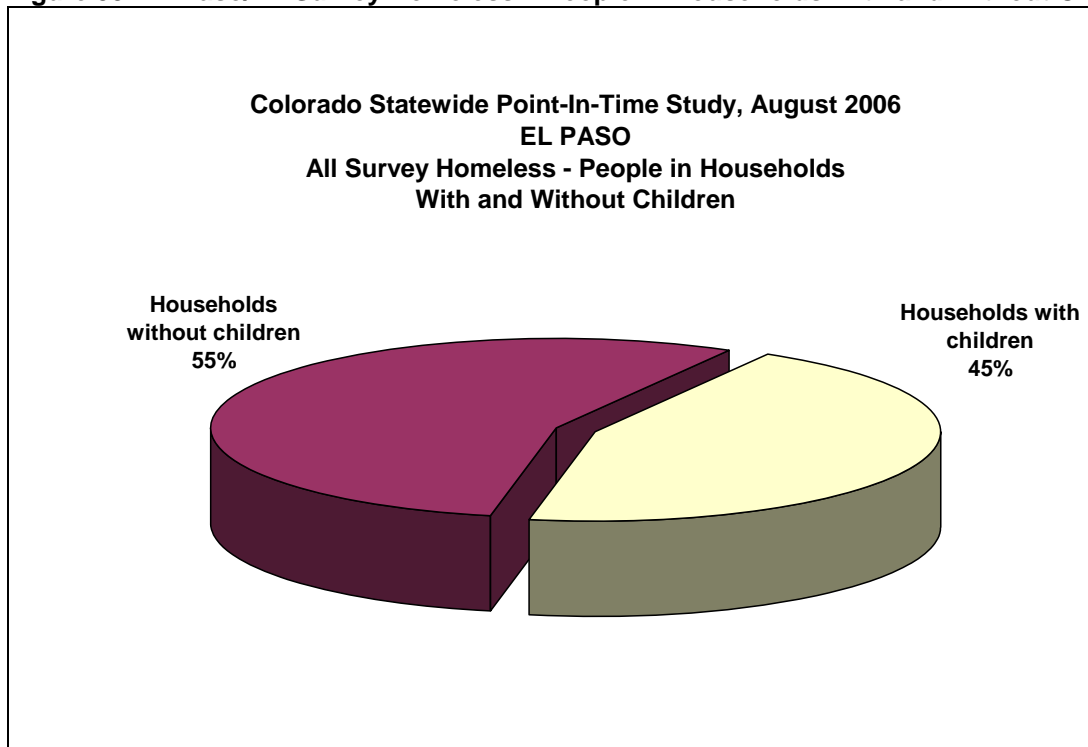


Figure 60. El Paso/Respondents – Age Groups

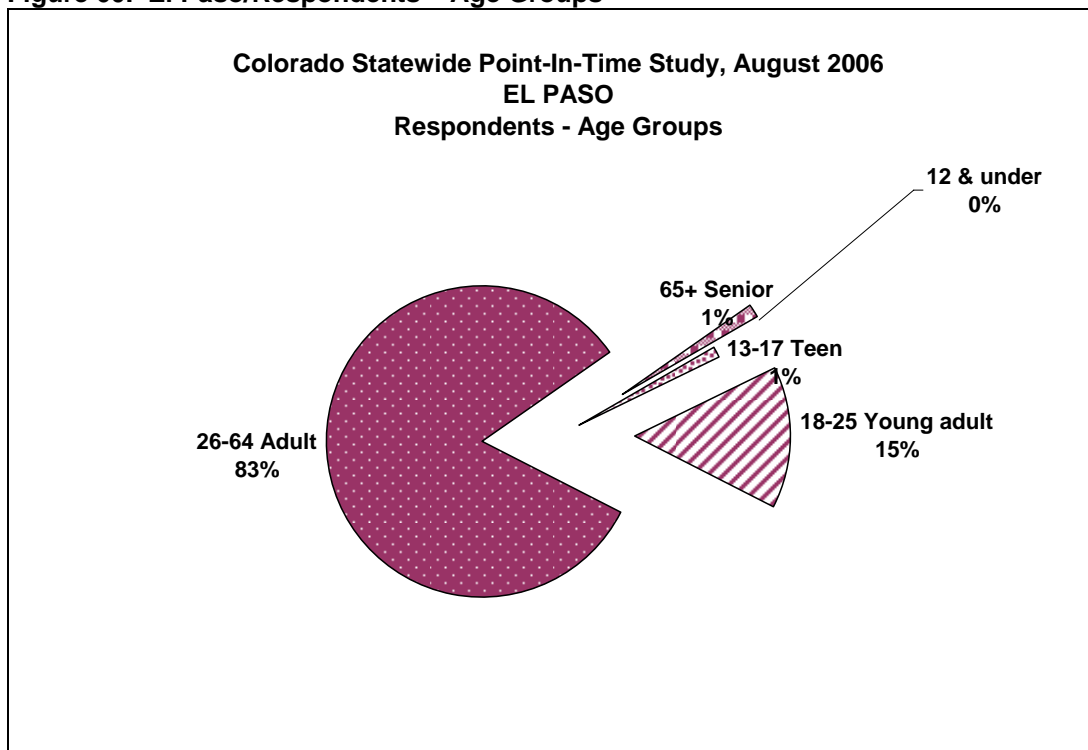


Figure 61 El Paso/All Survey Homeless – Age Groups

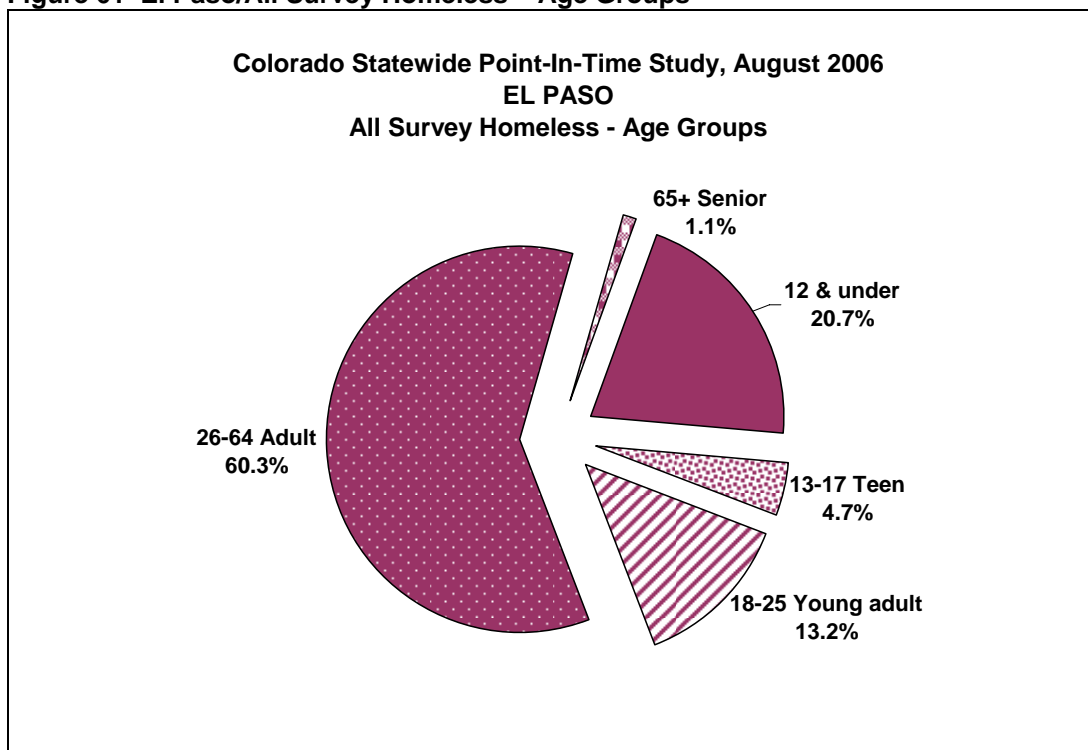


Figure 62. El Paso/Respondents - Gender

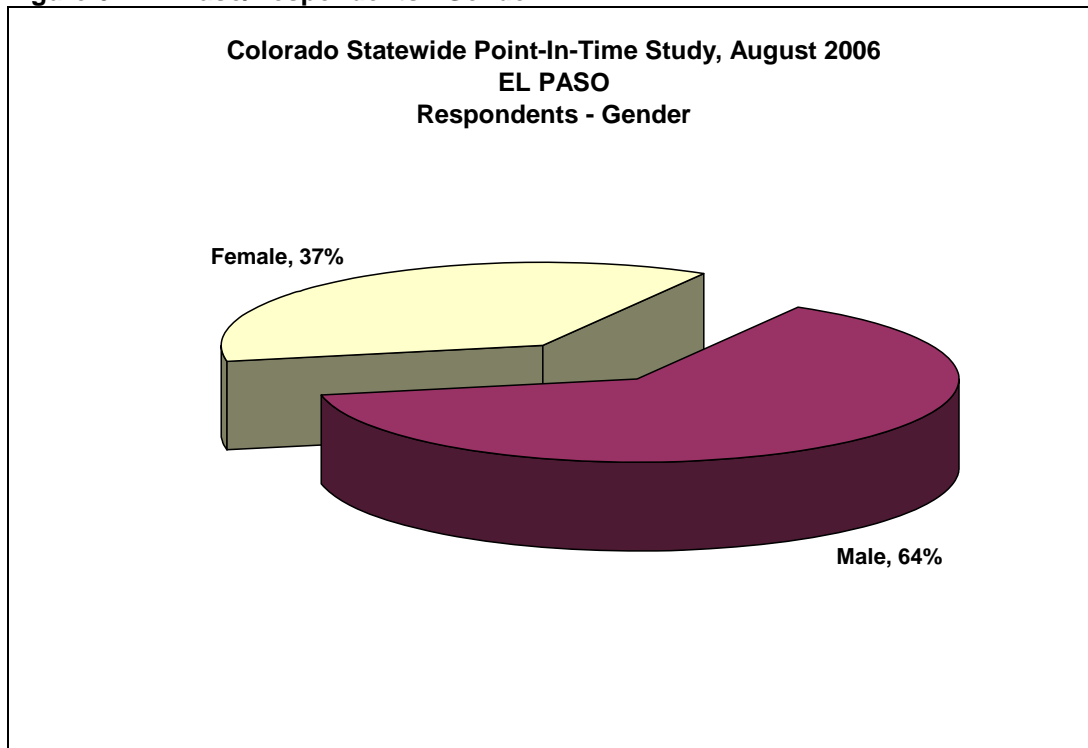


Figure 63. El Paso/Respondents – Race/Ethnicity

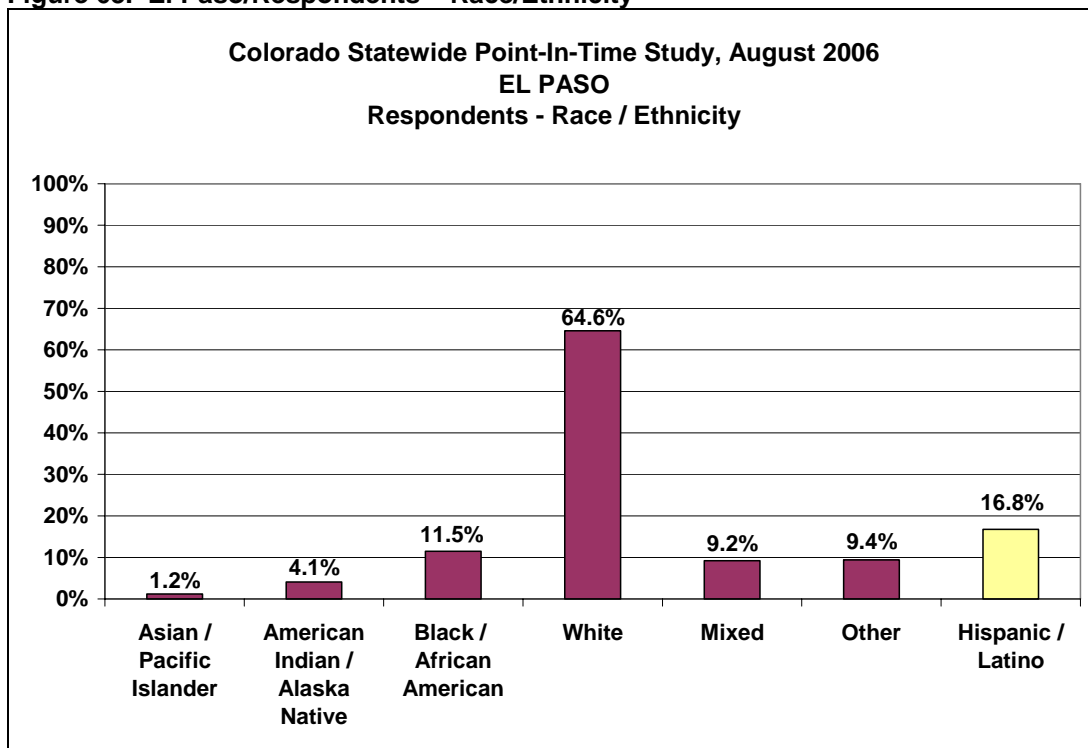


Figure 64 El Paso/Respondents – Military Service, Foster Care, Seasonal, Yr-Round Worker

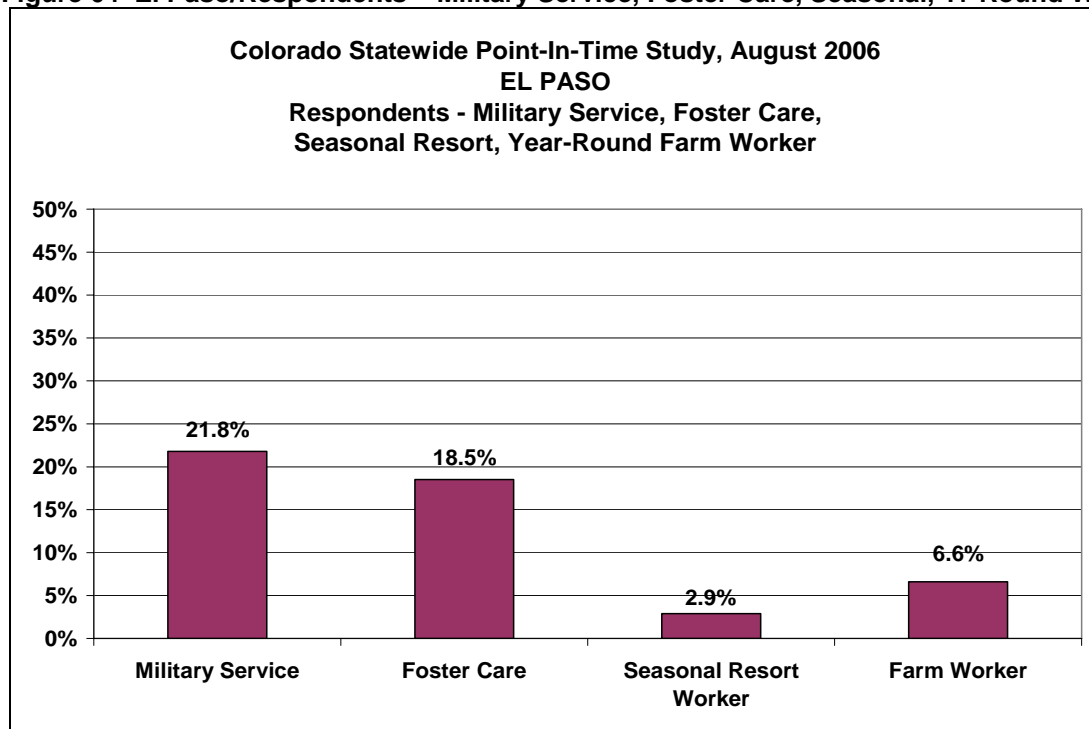


Figure 65. El Paso/All Survey Homeless – Type of Place, Monday Night

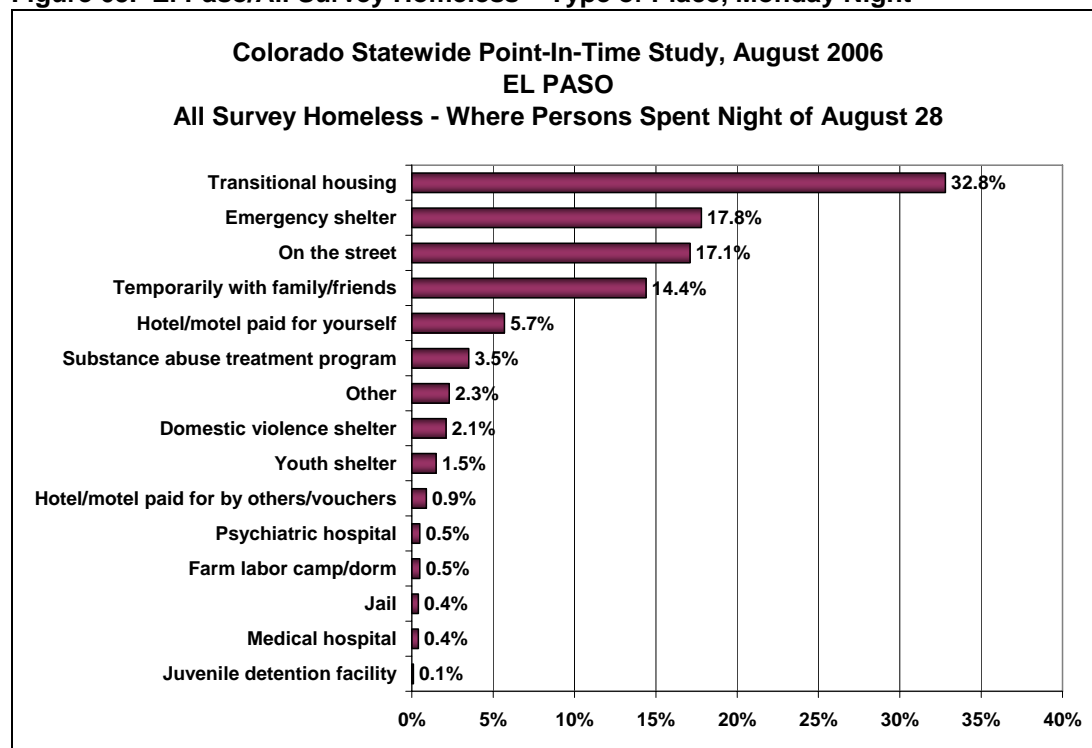


Figure 66. El Paso/Respondents – Reasons for Homelessness

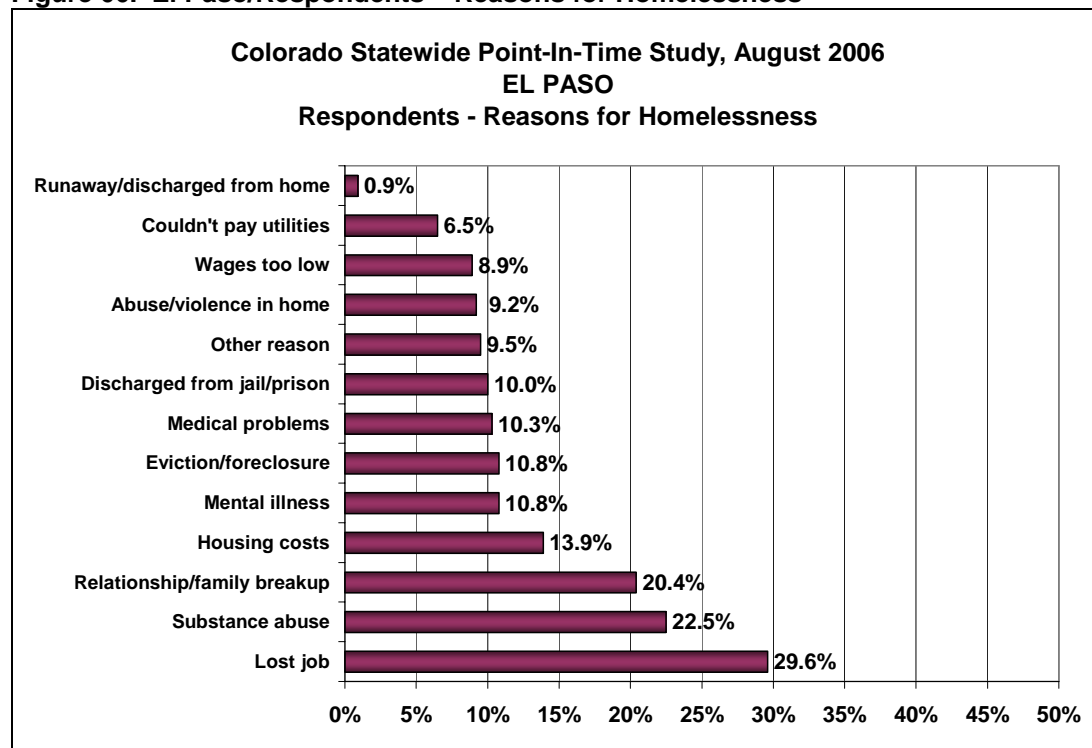


Figure 67. El Paso/Respondents – Disabling Conditions

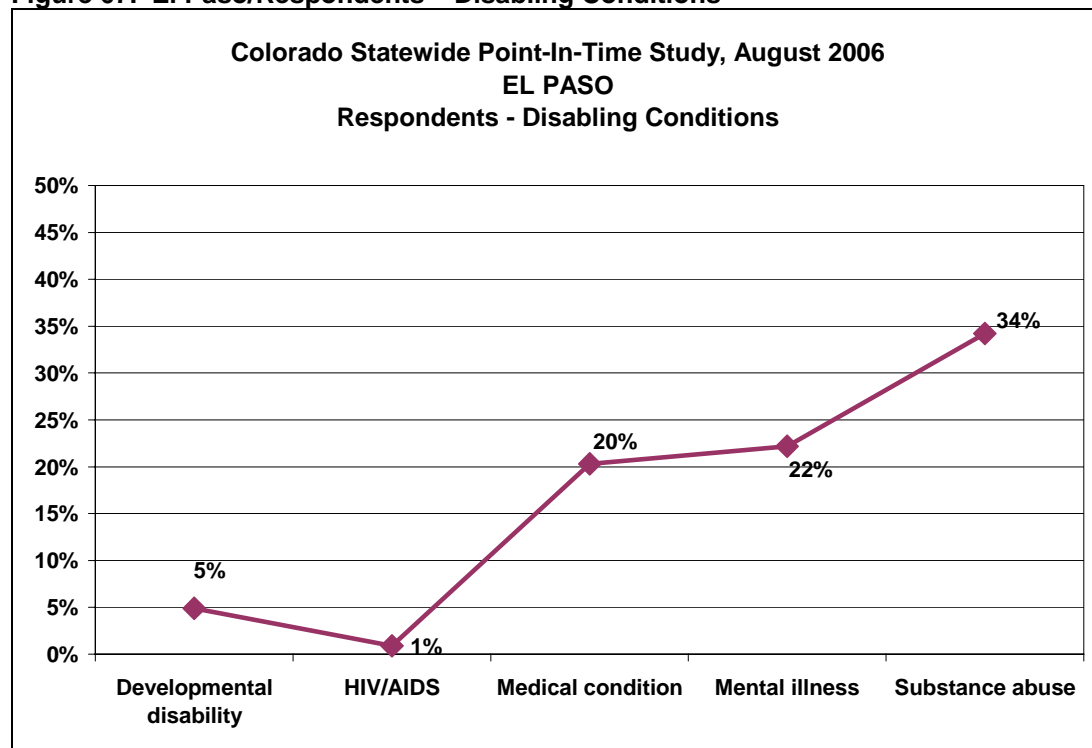


Figure 68. El Paso/Respondents – Money from Work

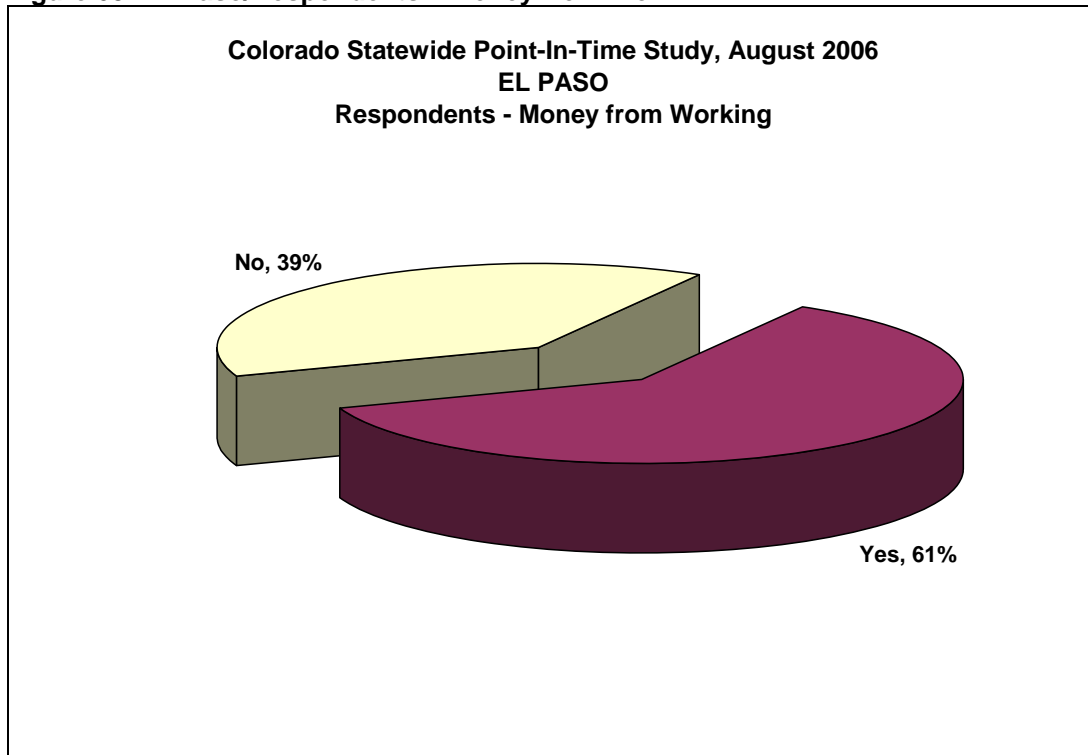


Figure 69. El Paso/Respondents – Government Benefits

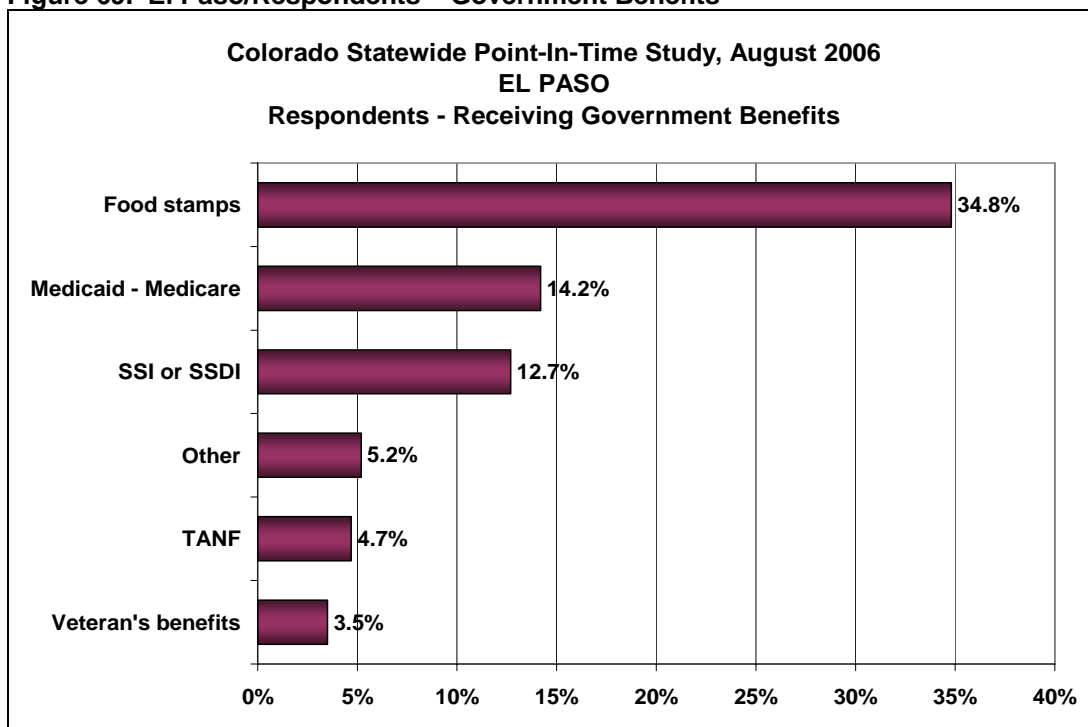


Figure 70. El Paso/Respondents – Needed Services

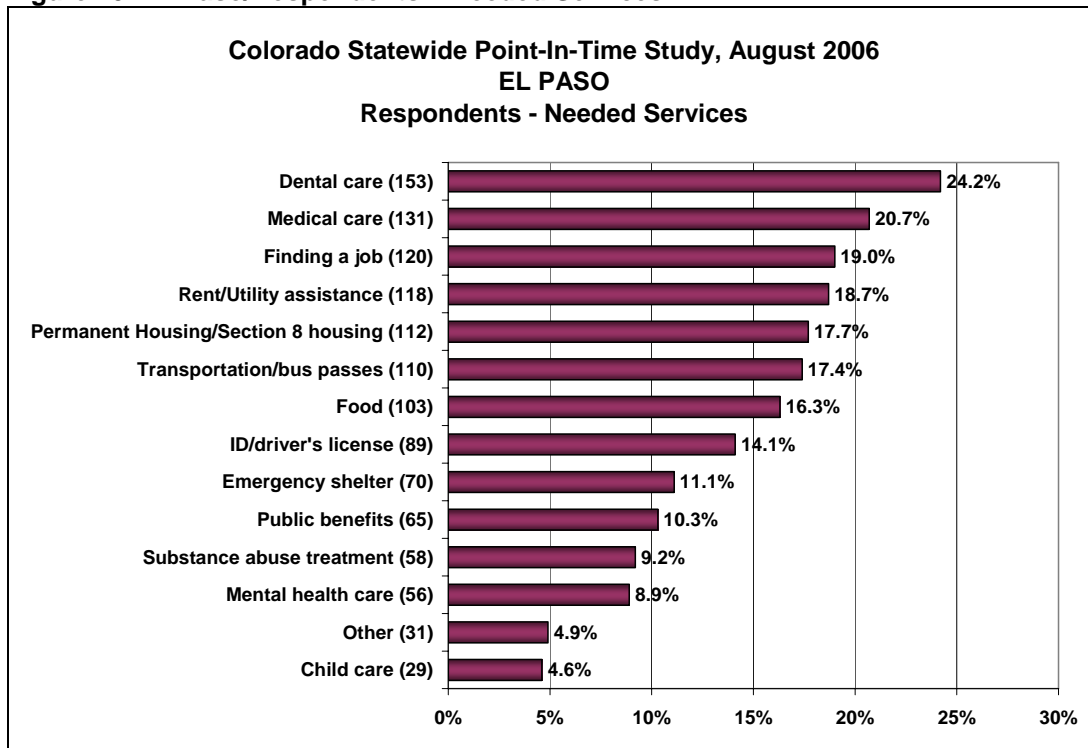


Figure 71. El Paso/Respondents – Chronic Homelessness

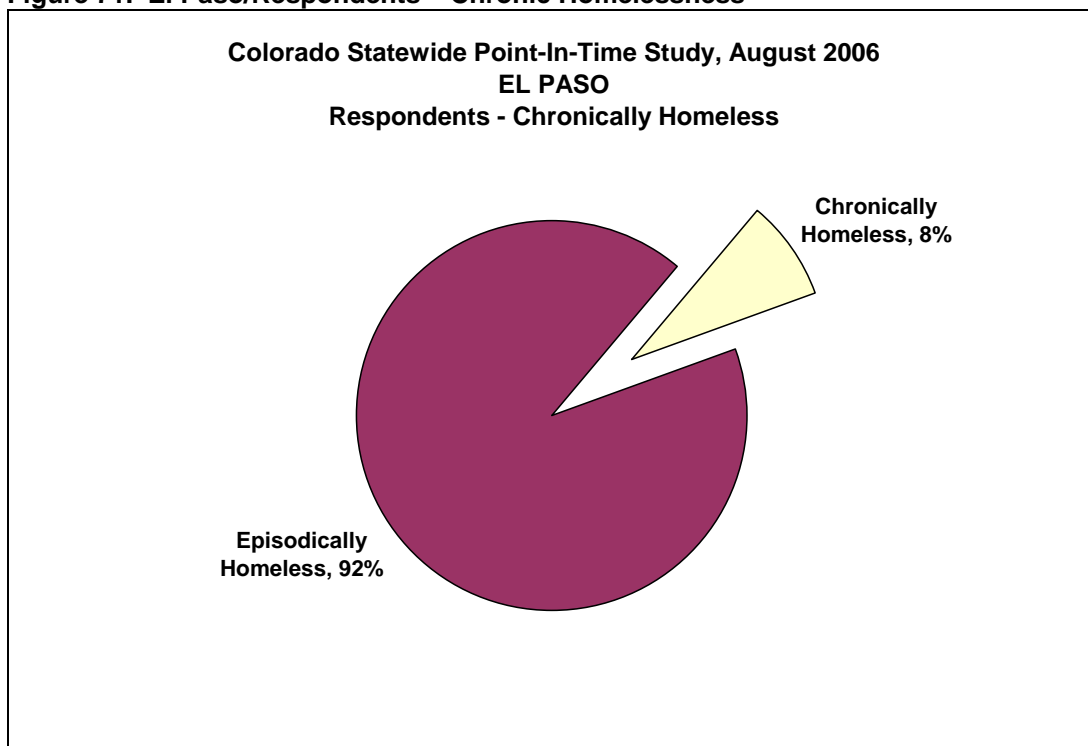


Figure 72. El Paso/All Survey Homeless – Newly Homeless by Household Situation

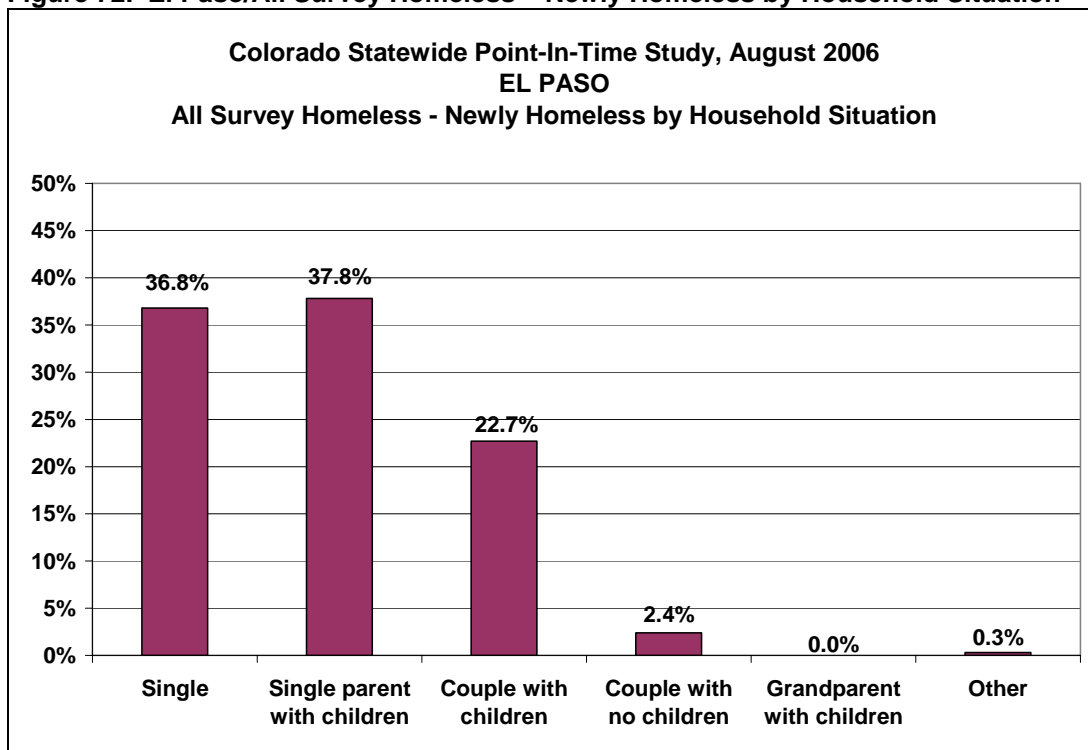


Figure 73. El Paso/All Survey Homeless – Newly Homeless, Households With & Without Children

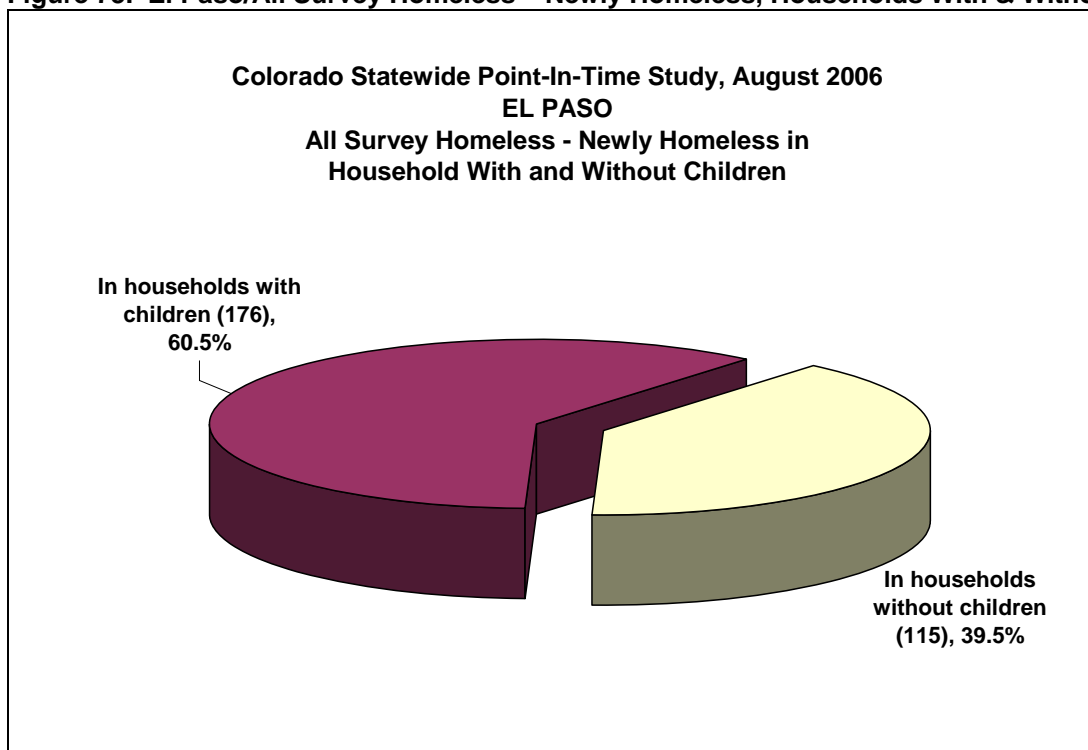
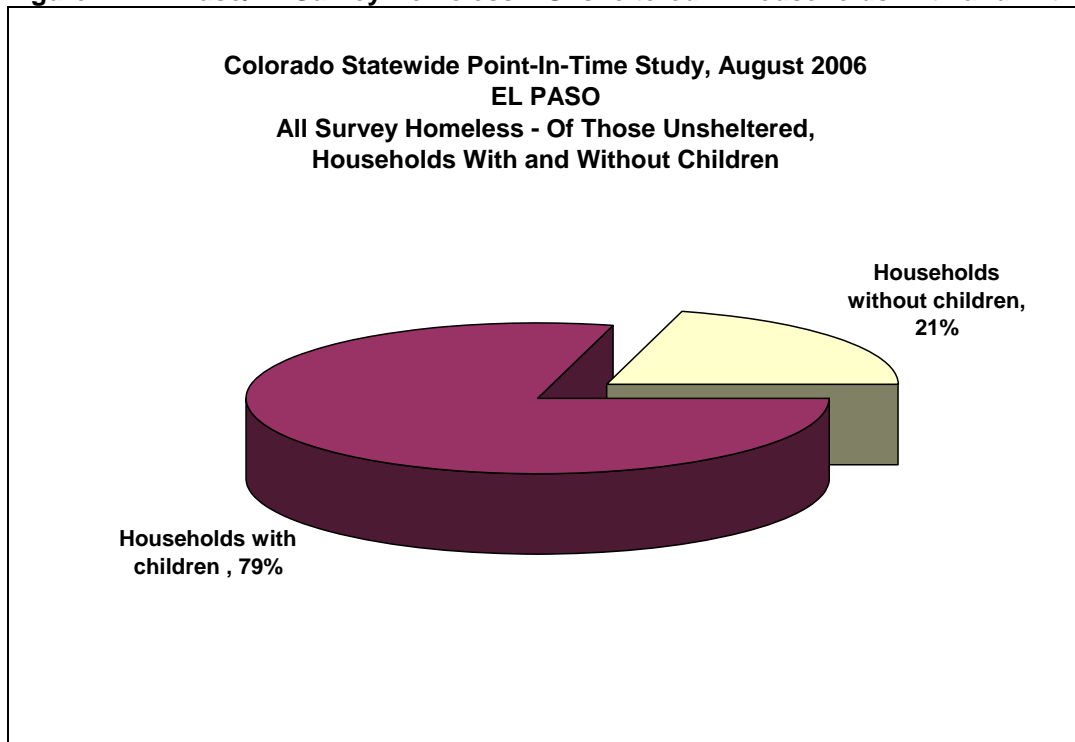


Figure 74. El Paso/All Survey Homeless – Unsheltered in Households With and Without Children



BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM OF CARE

Total Homeless with Unsheltered Counts/Estimates:

Table 7. TOTAL HOMELESS – BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	1,747
Relatives	1,382
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	3,129
UNSHELTERED COUNT ³⁸	
Count – Unsheltered	2,328
SURVEY ESTIMATE ³⁹	
Additional relatives not fully identified by respondents	334
TOTAL	5,791

Survey Data:

There were 1,747 respondents in the Balance of State Continuum determined to have been homeless on the night of August 28, 2006. Respondents were accompanied by 1,382 family members, for a total of 3,129 persons who were homeless on August 28, 2006.

1. Household Situation

Respondents: A slim majority (56.1%) of respondents identified themselves as single. Nearly one in four (23.5%) were single parents with children under 18, and 12 percent (11.7%) were part of a couple with children younger under 18. Eight percent (7.9%) were part of a couple without children younger than 18. Overall, more than one in three (36.4%) households were households with children under 18.

All Survey Homeless: Single individuals and single parent households each accounted for one-third (33.4%) of all survey homeless persons. One in four (24.4%) homeless persons was part of a couple with children.

³⁸ Agencies submitted estimates of unsheltered homeless persons, that is, unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted. These estimates identify a total of 1,043 homeless persons. Combined with all the surveyed homeless and the number of unsheltered homeless who were counted but not surveyed, an estimated **6,834** people were homeless on August 28, 2006.

³⁹ See footnote 4.

2. Respondent Characteristics

Respondents: While respondents ranged in age from school age to seniors, most (79.0%) were adults age 26-64. Eighteen percent (17.5%) were young adults. Seniors and teens comprised only 2 percent and 1 percent of homeless respondents, respectively.

Nearly three in five respondents (58.9%) were male. Single people were almost three times as likely to be male as female: 73.9 percent compared to 26.1 percent. In contrast, females were much more likely than males to head single-parent families: 78.7 percent versus 21.3 percent. One in three (29.4%) identified as Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, and a similar proportion (30.9%) were minority.

Fourteen percent (13.9%) had served in the U.S. military. One-fifth (20.6%) reported ever being in foster care or another type of out-of-home placement as a child or youth.

Eight percent (8.1%) were seasonal or year-round farm workers, and 6 percent (5.7%) were seasonal resort workers.

3. Last Permanent Residence

Respondents: Nearly three of five respondents (58.6%) said that one of the counties in the Balance of State Continuum was the last county they considered their permanent place to live. Seven percent (6.8%) said their last permanent place to live was in a Colorado county outside the Balance of State. One-third (34.6%) said that their last permanent place to live was outside Colorado. Three hundred and twelve (312) respondents did not report the county where they had their last permanent residence. It is conceivable that many of these respondents last resided in another Colorado county, but were unable to specify the county.

4. Type of Place

All Survey Homeless: On August 28, 2006, nearly one-third (30.6%) of all survey homeless people were staying temporarily with family or friends. One in five (19.4%) were in time-limited transitional housing, and 11 percent (10.8%) were staying in an emergency shelter. Fully one in five (19.6%) were unsheltered.

5. Reasons for Homelessness

Respondents: Respondents were asked to indicate “all that apply” from a list of possible reasons for becoming homeless this time. High housing-associated costs were a major reason for homelessness. One in three (30.3%) said they were homeless because housing costs were too high. Nearly one in five (18.8%) could not pay their utilities, and 13 percent (12.5%) cited eviction or foreclosure as a reason for their homelessness. One-quarter (24.8%) had lost their job or could not find work, and 15 percent (14.8%) said that their wages were too low. Seventeen percent (16.4%) said that abuse or violence in their home was a cause of their homelessness. From 13 percent to 14 percent said they were homeless because of medical problems (13.7%), substance abuse (13.5%), or mental illness (13.1%).

Respondents in households with children were more likely than those in households without children to say that high housing, high utility costs, and eviction or foreclosure were reasons for their current spell of homelessness. In addition, a substantially greater percentage of

households with children than without reported abuse/violence in the home as a reason for homelessness: 28.7 percent versus 10.9 percent. In contrast, a higher percentage of respondents in households without children reported substance abuse and mental illness as reasons for their homelessness.

6. Disabling Conditions

Respondents: Half of respondents (52.2%) said that they have, or have been told that they have, at least one of the following serious conditions: serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. One in four (24.6%) said that alcohol or drug abuse is a problem, and more than one in five have a serious medical or physical condition (22.7%) or a serious mental illness (21.2%).

More than two-thirds (69.0%) of respondents with at least one disability were single, and three-quarters (76.5%) were in households without children.

7. Sources of Income/Government Benefits

Respondents: Sixty percent (60.2%) of respondents said that they or someone else in their family received money from working since the beginning of the year. A majority (56.4%) said that their family was receiving at least one government benefit. More than one-third (38.3%) said that someone in their family was receiving food stamps. One-quarter (24.7%) were receiving Medicaid/Medicare, and 16 percent (16.3%) were receiving SSI or SSDI. Seven percent (6.7%) said their family was getting TANF.

8. Needed Services

Respondents: Respondents were asked what services they needed in the past month that they were unable to obtain. Fully two in three respondents (67.5%) said that they needed at least one service that they were not able to get. Specifically, one-fifth (20.7%) said they needed one service, 15 percent (14.6%) needed two services, 10 percent (10.2%) needed three services, and one-fifth (21.9%) said that they needed 4 or more services.

Respondents and their families were most in need of housing-related assistance: more than one in four (27.8%) said they needed help finding Section 8 or other permanent housing, and more than one in five (22.2%) needed rent or utility assistance. One-fifth (20.0%) needed transportation/bus passes, and nearly as many (19.1%) needed help finding a job. Slightly fewer needed help with food (18.3%) and medical care (18.0%).

9. Duration and Episodes of Homelessness

Respondents:

Duration: Respondents were asked: "How long have you been without a permanent place to live this time?" One in five (20.3%) said their current spell of homelessness was less than one month, and nearly half (45.0%) said they had been homeless for more than one month, but less than one year. Twelve percent (11.5%) reported that they had been homeless for more than three years.

Respondents in households with children were slightly more likely to have been homeless this time for less than one month. Respondents in households without children were much more likely to have been homeless for more than three years: 16.7 percent versus 2.1 percent.

Male respondents were more likely than females to have been homeless this time for more than three years: 17.4 percent versus 5.9 percent.

Episodes: One in three (30.2%) of respondents said that this was the first time they had been without a permanent place to live in the last three years. One-fifth (19.2%) said this was their second spell of homelessness in the last three years. One in four (24.4%) said that they had been homeless five or more times in the past three years.

Males were more likely than females to report that they have had five or more spells of homelessness in the last three years: compare 31.2 percent with 18.3 percent.

Respondents in households without children have had more episodes of homelessness than those in households with children. More than one-third (37.5%) of respondents in households with children said that this was the first time they had been without a permanent place to live in the last three years, while 12 percent (12.0%) had been homeless five or more times during this period. In contrast, respondents in households without children were less likely to say this was the first time they had been homeless in the past three years (27.0%), and one in three (30.8%) reported that they had had five or more spells of homelessness during this period.

10. Chronically Homeless Individuals

Respondents: As of the night of August 28, 2006, 9.7 percent of respondents or 169 individuals were considered chronically homeless. Four-fifths (79.9%) of the chronically homeless were male.

11. Newly Homeless

All Survey Homeless: On August 28, 2006, 706 people or more than one in five (22.6%) were considered newly homeless. The largest group of newly homeless persons were single parents with children (36.8%), followed by couples with children (29.2%). Single persons comprised one-quarter (26.8%) of the newly homeless. More than two-thirds (68.6%) of all newly homeless individuals were in households with children.

12. Unsheltered Homeless

All Survey Homeless: One in five (19.6%) of all survey homeless persons were unsheltered. One-third (32.7%) of all unsheltered homeless were in households with children.

Balance of State (BOS) Continuum - Figures

Figure 75. BOS/Respondents – Household Situation

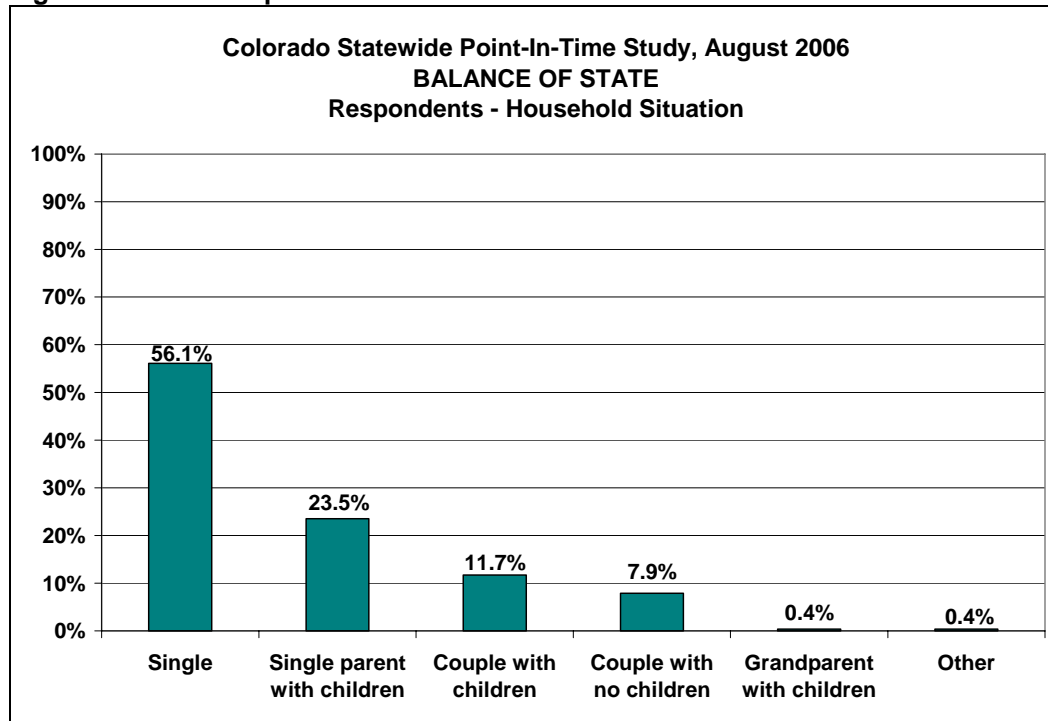


Figure 76. BOS/Respondents – Households With and Without Children

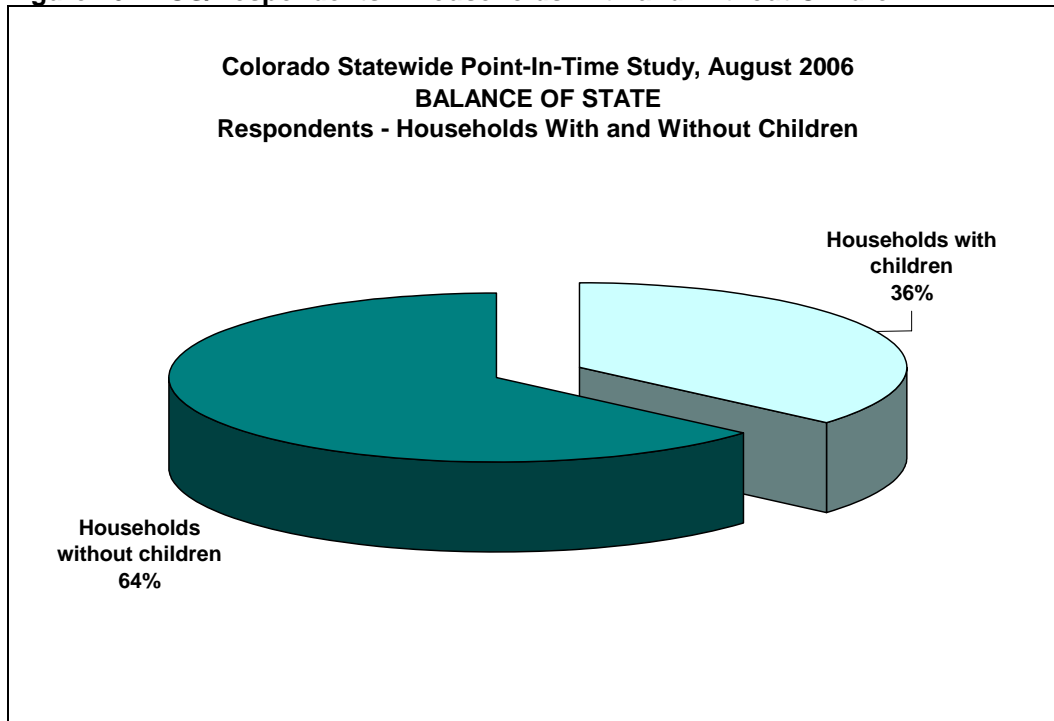


Figure 77. BOS/All Survey Homeless – Household Situation

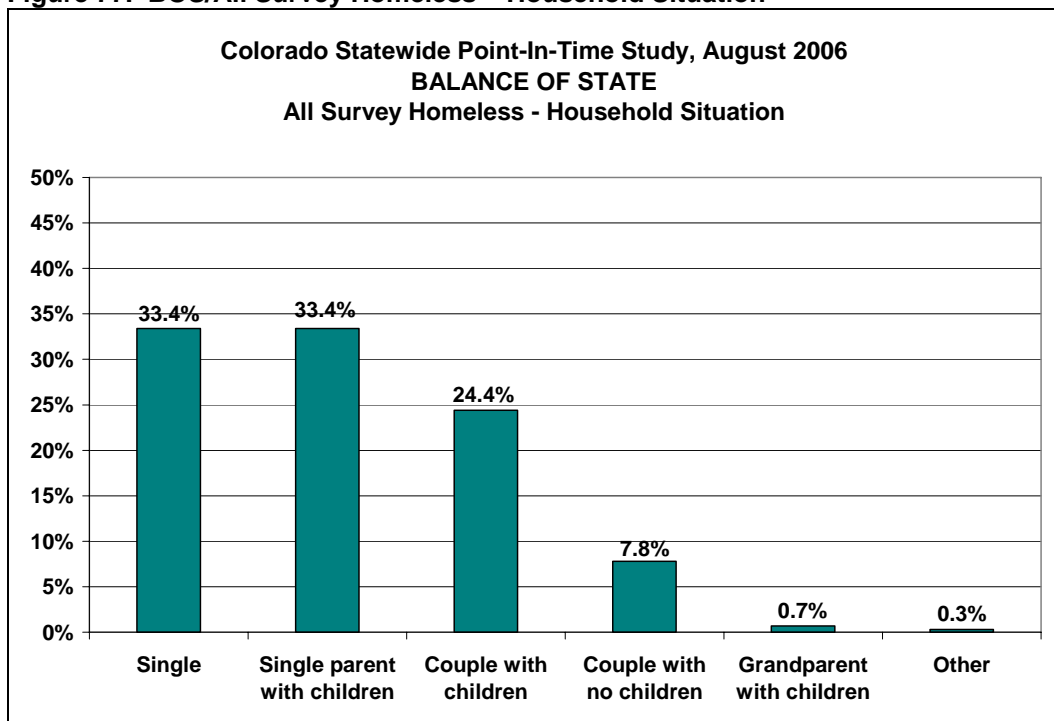


Figure 78. BOS/All Survey Homeless – People in Households With and Without Children

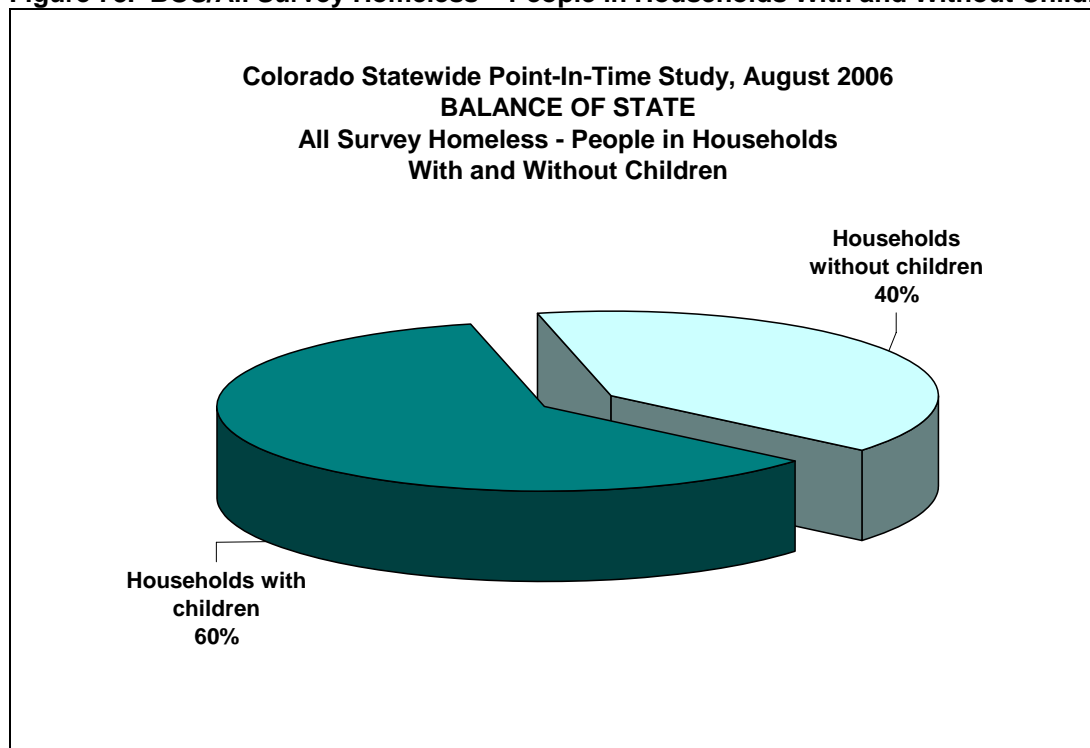


Figure 79. BOS/Respondents – Age Groups

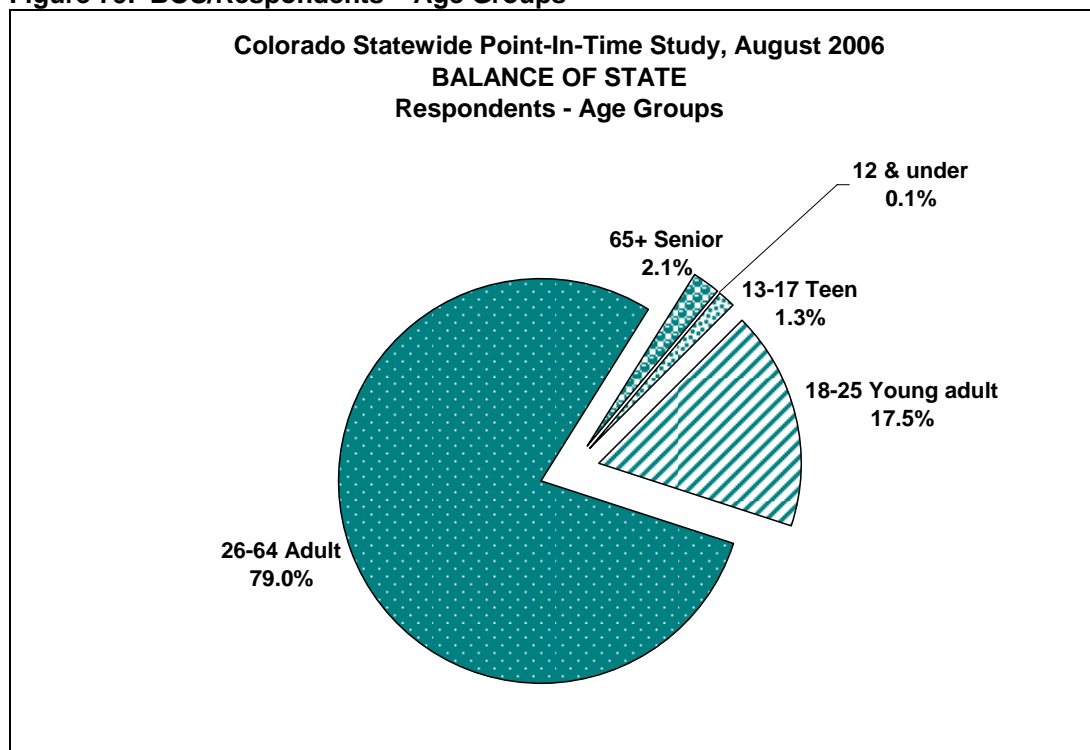


Figure 80. BOS/All Survey Homeless Age Groups

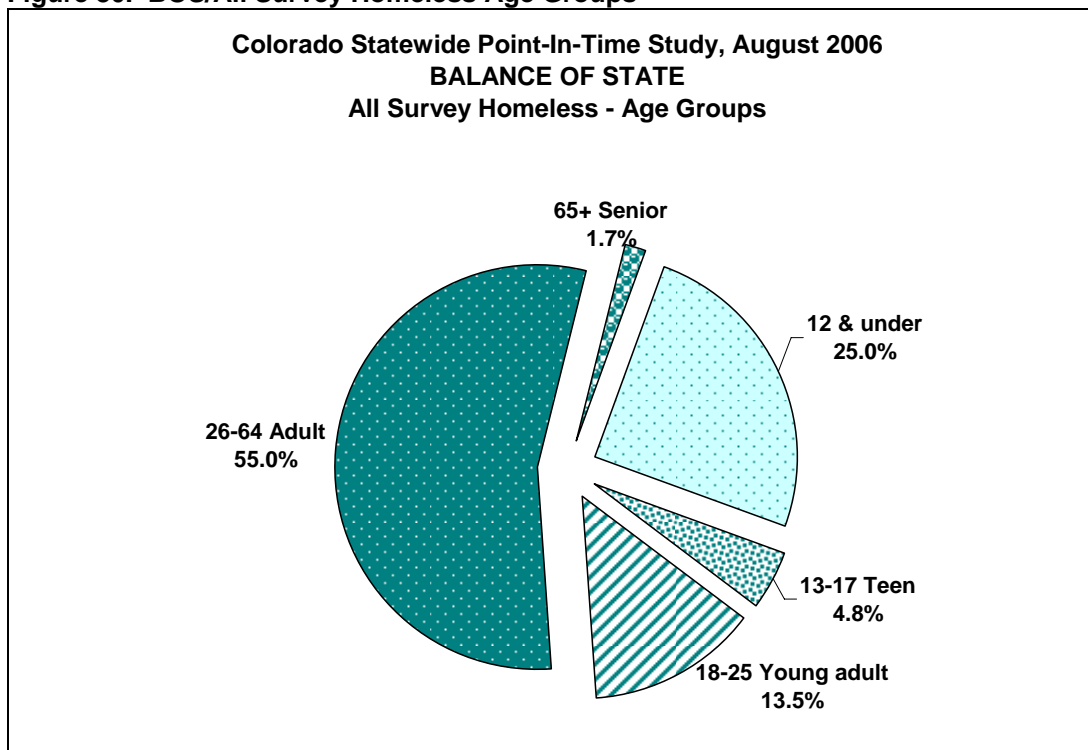


Figure 81. BOS/Respondents - Gender

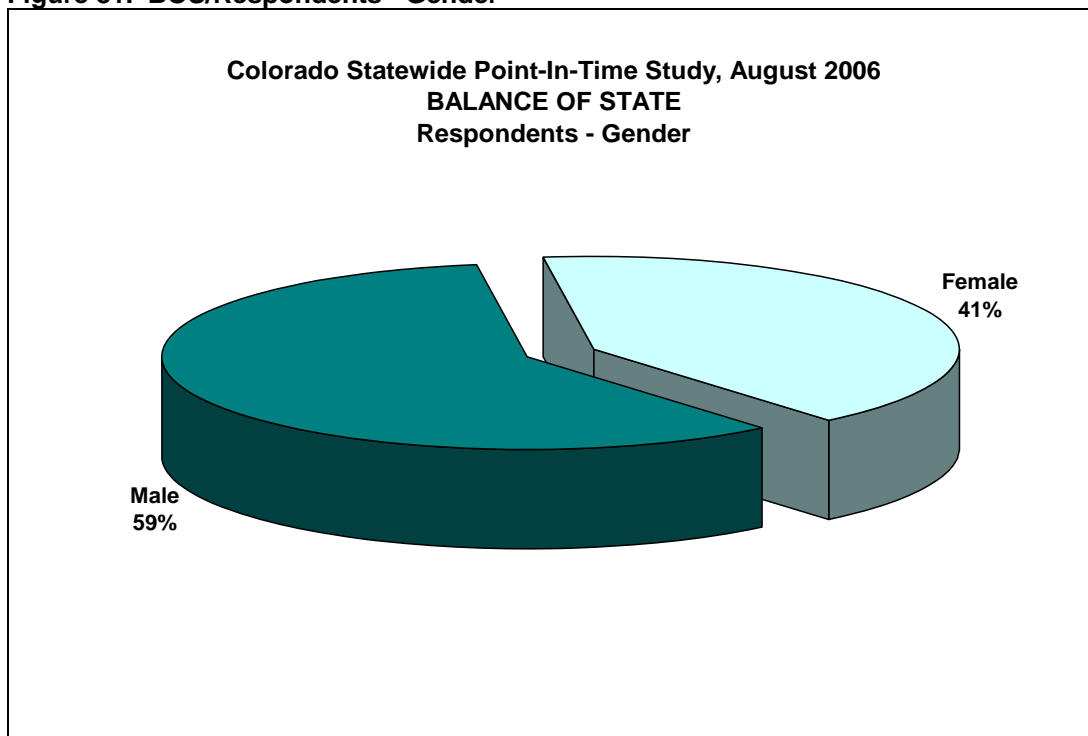


Figure 82. BOS/Respondents – Race/Ethnicity

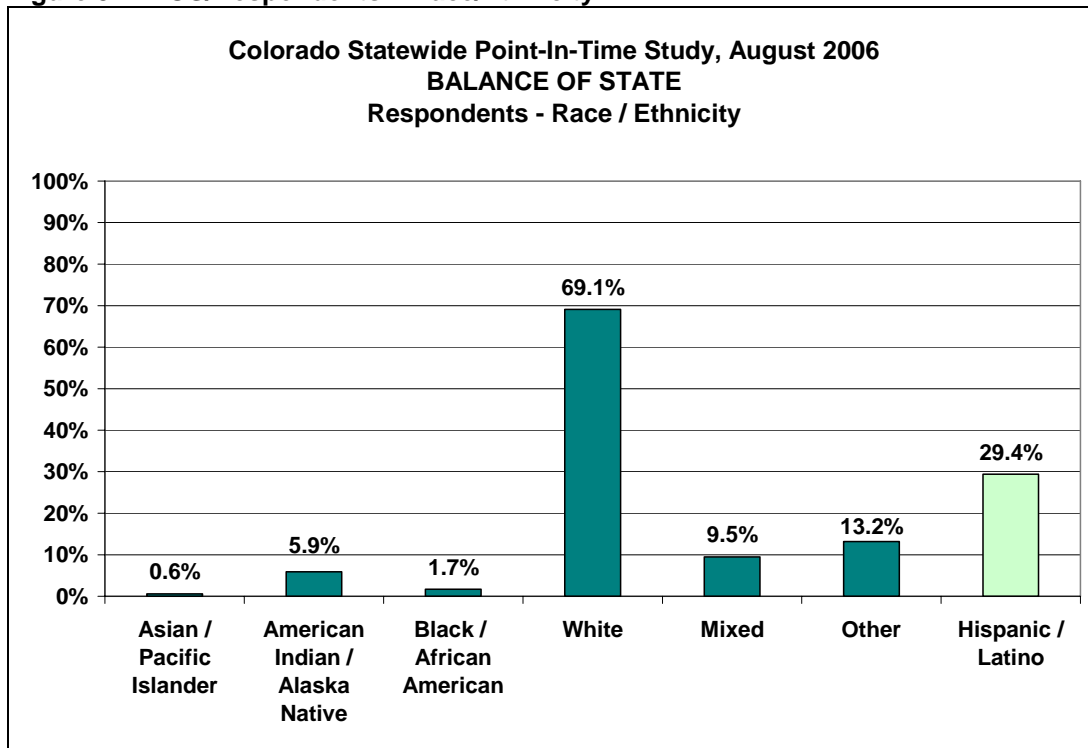


Figure 83. BOS/Respondents – Military Service, Foster Care, Seasonal, Yr-Round Worker

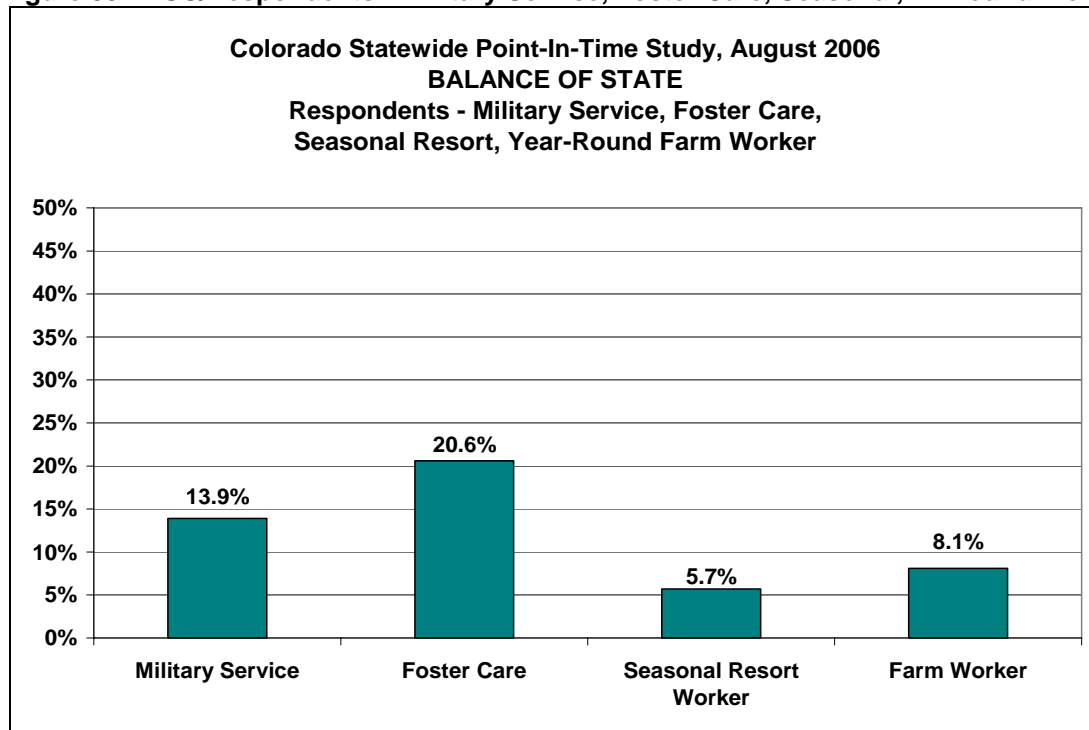


Figure 84. BOS All Survey Homeless – Type of Place, Monday Night

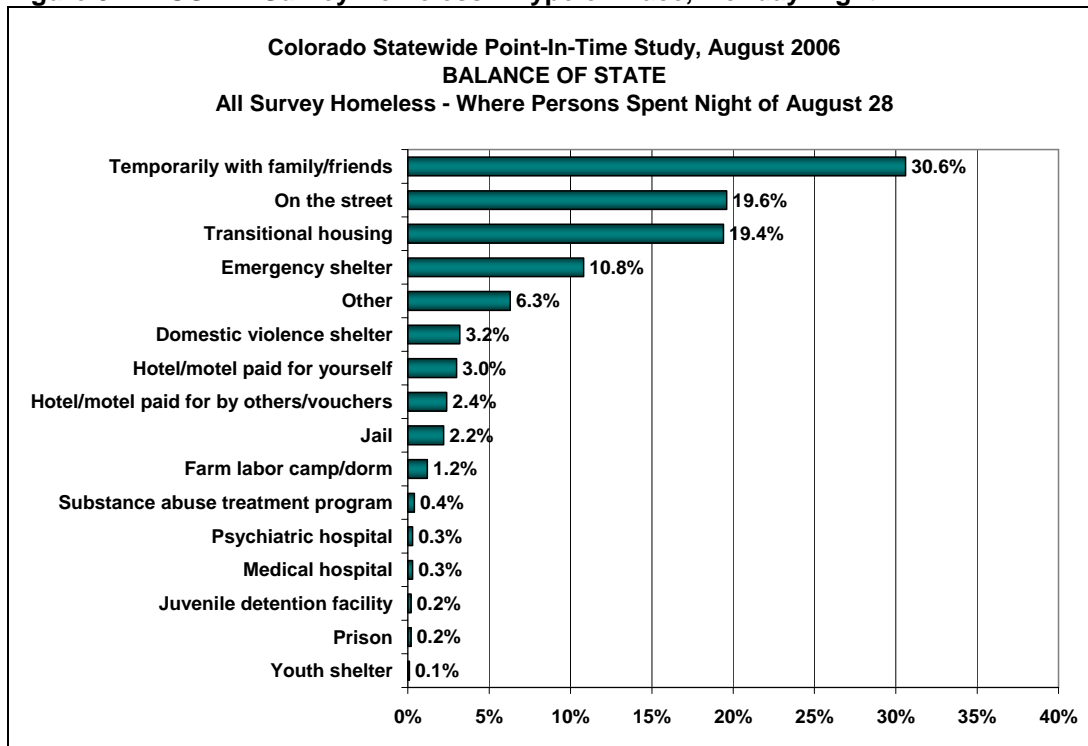


Figure 85. BOS/Respondents – Reasons for Homelessness

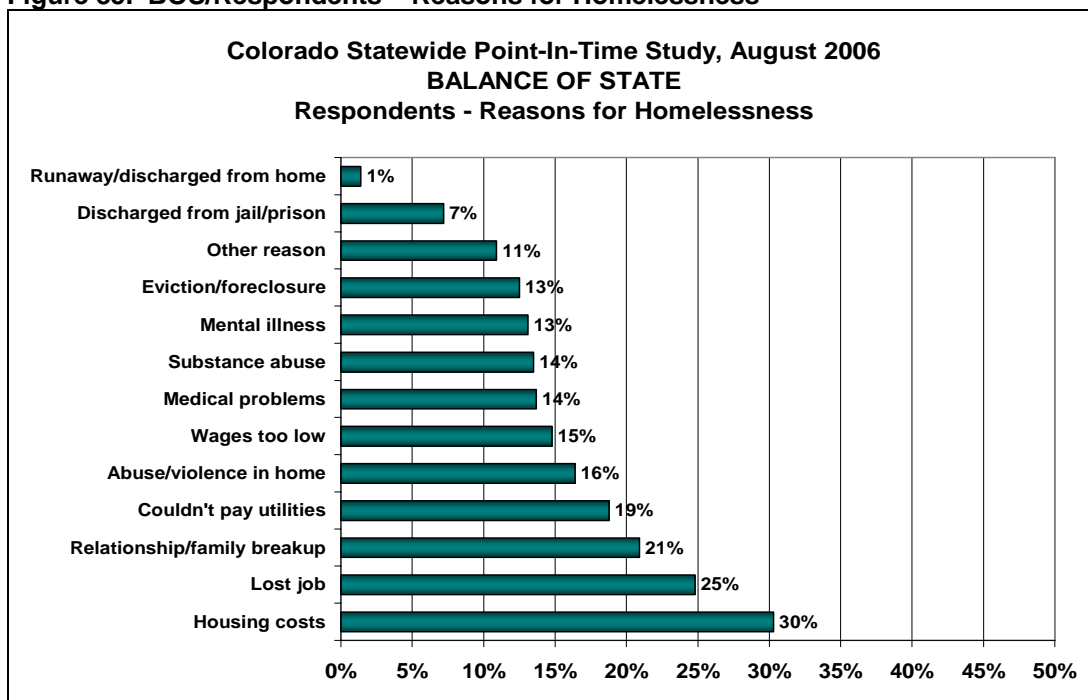


Figure 86. BOS/Respondents – Disabling Conditions

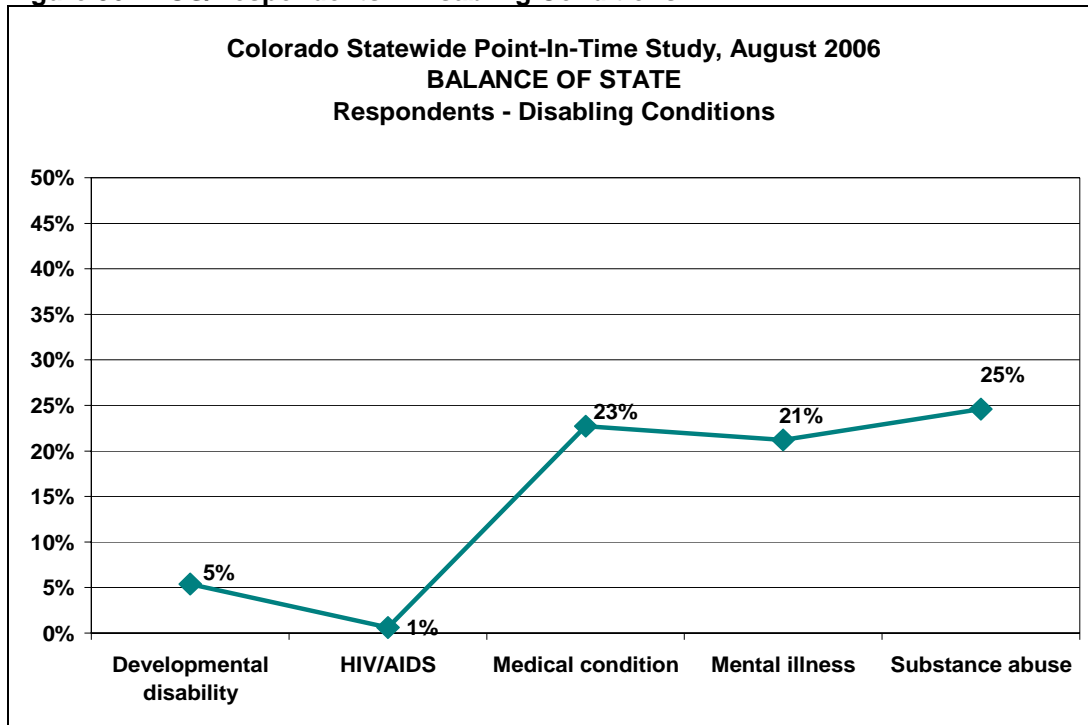


Figure 87. BOS/Respondents – Money from Work

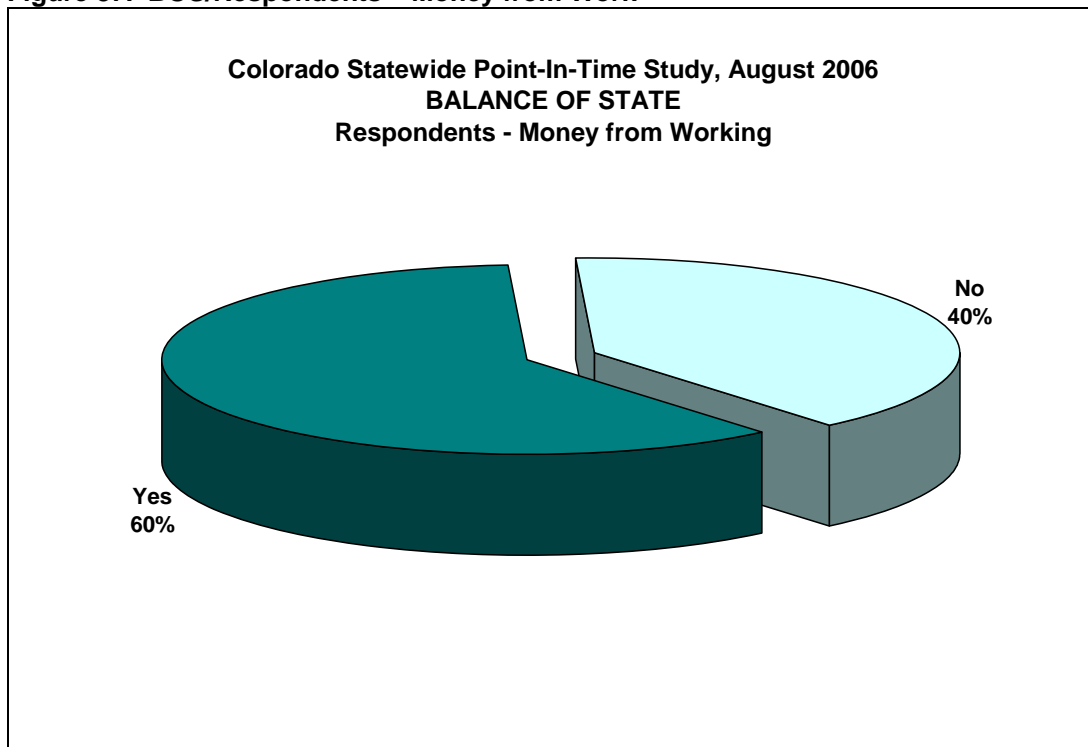


Figure 88. BOS/Respondents – Government Benefits

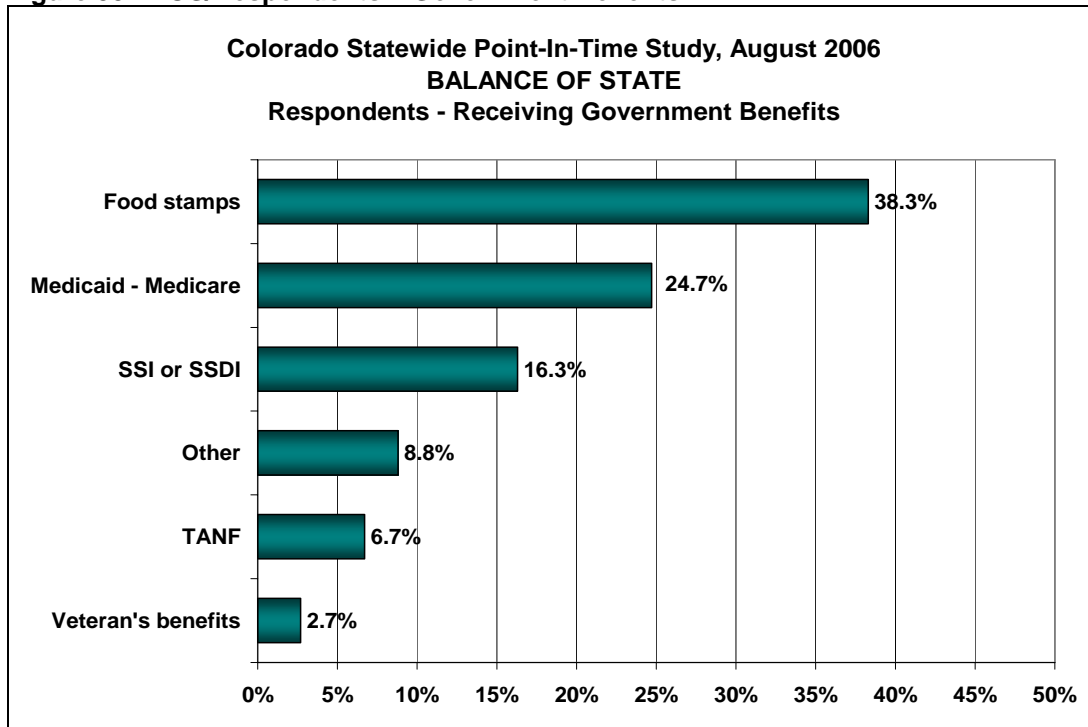


Figure 89. BOS/Respondents – Needed Services

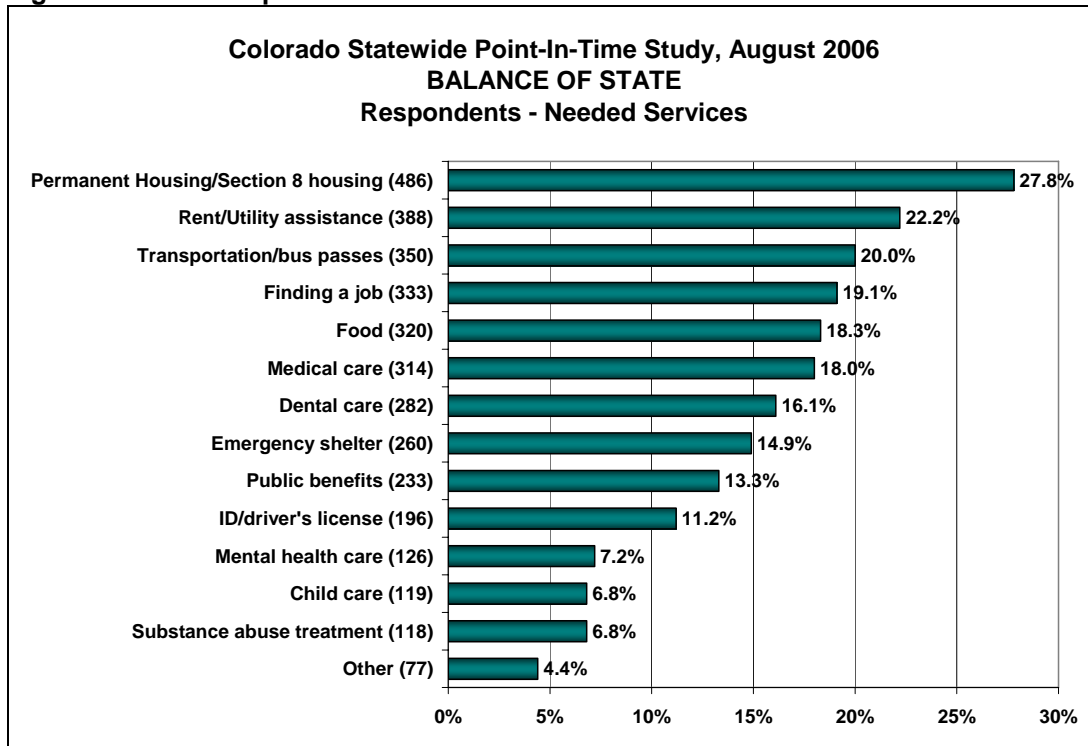


Figure 90. BOS/Respondents – Chronic Homelessness

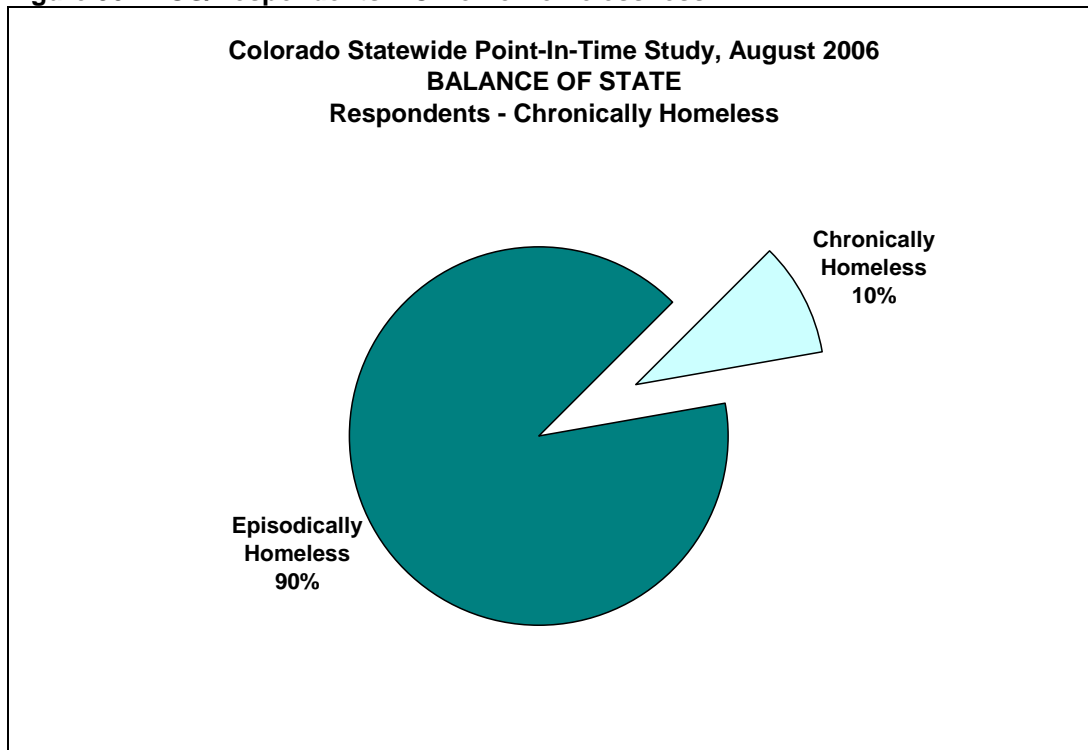


Figure 91. BOS/All Survey Homeless – Newly Homeless by Household Situation

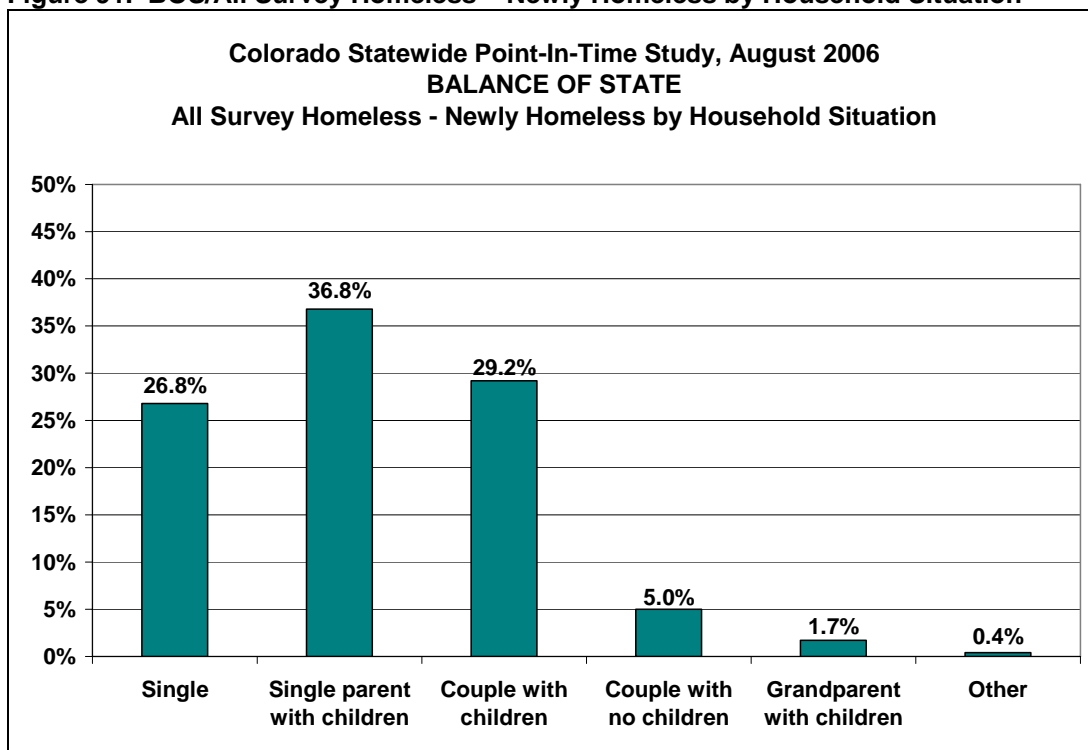


Figure 92. BOS/All Survey Homeless – Newly Homeless, Households With and Without Children

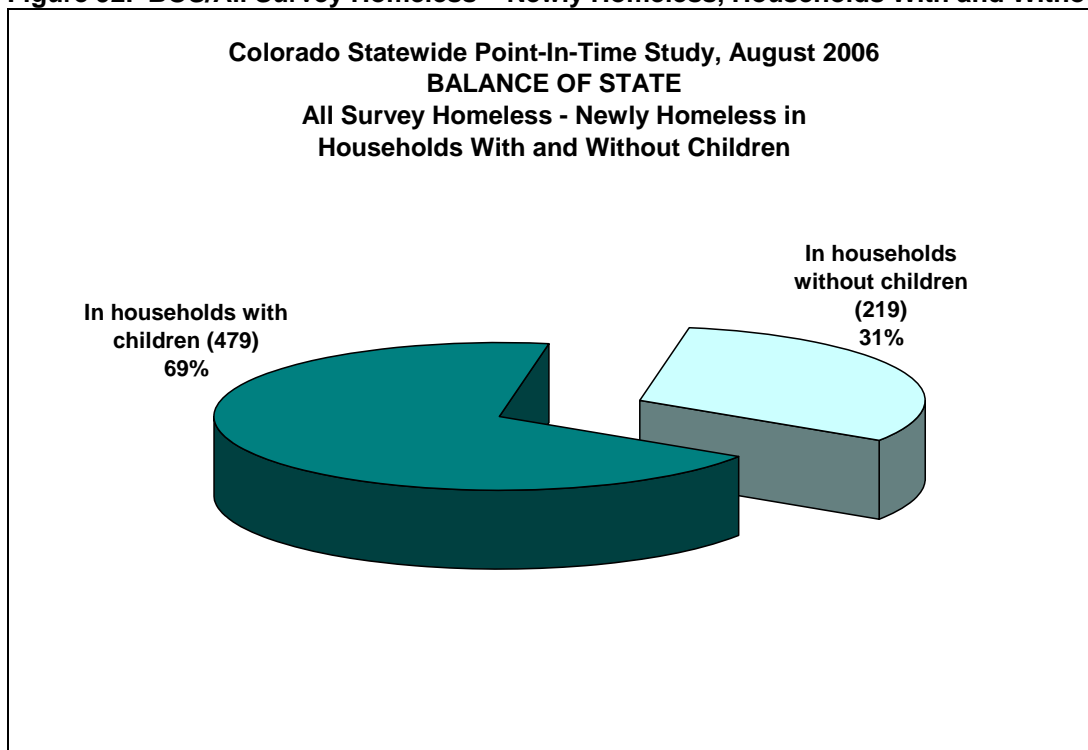
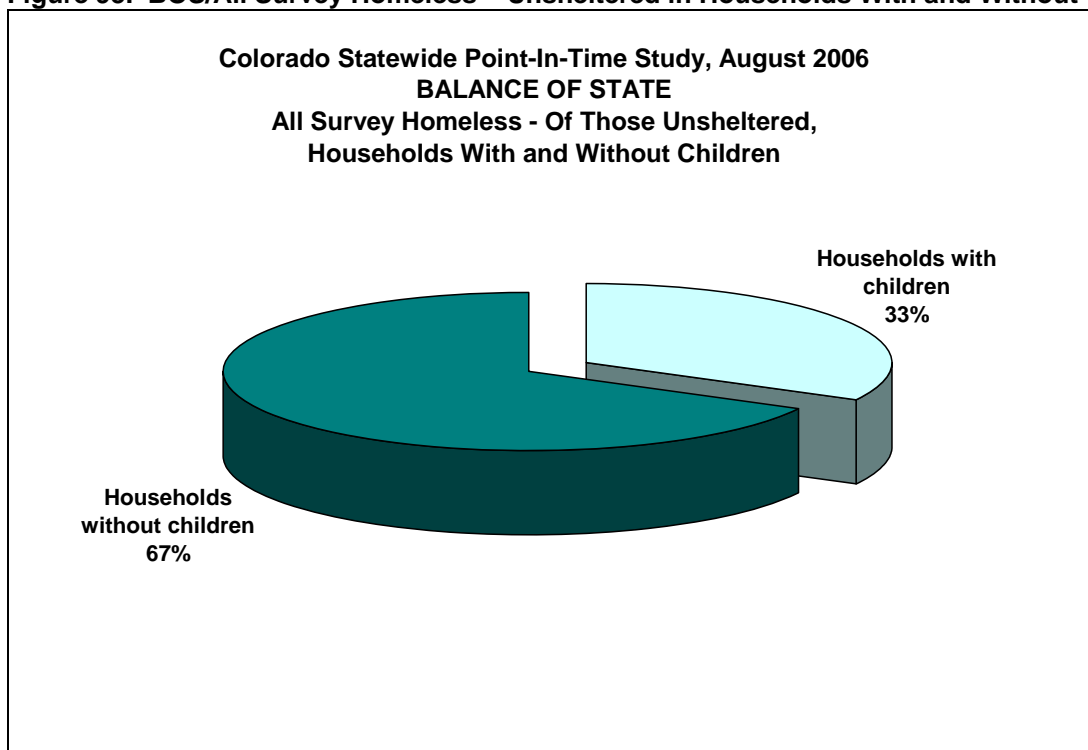


Figure 93. BOS/All Survey Homeless – Unsheltered in Households With and Without Children



PART V. REGIONS

This part reports the total homeless and key survey variables for each region.

For purposes of this study, the Colorado Division of Housing divided the state into nine geographic regions, as indicated in the following table.

Table 8. STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNT REGIONS AND COUNTIES				
REGION	COUNTY		REGION	COUNTY
Region 1	Delta		Region 6	Cheyenne
	Garfield			El Paso
	Mesa			Elbert
	Moffat			Kiowa
	Pitkin			Kit Carson
	Rio Blanco			Lincoln
	Routt			Teller
Region 2	Clear Creek		Region 7	Archuleta
	Eagle			Dolores
	Gilpin			La Plata
	Grand			Montezuma
	Jackson			Montrose
	Larimer			Ouray
	Summit			San Juan
Region 3	Logan		Region 8	San Miguel
	Morgan			Alamosa
	Phillips			Conejos
	Sedgwick			Costilla
	Washington			Mineral
	Weld			Rio Grande
	Yuma			Saguache
Region 4	Chaffee		Region 9	Baca
	Custer			Bent
	Fremont			Crowley
	Gunnison			Huerfano
	Hinsdale			Las Animas
	Lake			Otero
	Park			Prowers
Region 5	Adams			Pueblo
	Arapahoe			
	Boulder			
	Broomfield			
	Denver			
	Douglas			
	Jefferson			

TOTAL HOMELESS PERSONS FOR EACH REGION

Tables 9 through 17 describe the number of total homeless persons for each region.^{40 41}

Agencies submitted estimates of unsheltered homeless persons. These estimates are given for each region after the table.

Table 9. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 1	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	316
Relatives	152
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	468
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	1,305
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 1	1,773

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 97)

Table 10. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 2	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	404
Relatives	247
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	651
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	47
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 2	698

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 136)

⁴⁰ The Regional Tables do not include aggregate domestic violence data or number of additional relatives not fully documented by respondents. These numbers are given statewide in *Table 1 Total Homeless – Statewide*.

⁴¹ Survey respondents (and their families) were placed into the appropriate Continuum and county based on their response to question 18: "In what county will you/did you spend the night, Monday, August 28, 2006?" This information is missing for a total of 56 persons: 27 respondents and the 29 homeless relatives they identified. Because it was not possible to determine Continuum or county for this group, these homeless respondents and their family members are not included in the Continuum or regional analyses.

Table 11. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 3	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	169
Relatives	240
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	409
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	120
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 3	529

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 9)

Table 12. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 4	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	82
Relatives	71
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	153
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	38
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 4	191

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 218)

Table 13. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 5	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	4,259
Relatives	3,513
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	7,772
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	535
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 5	8,307

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 175)

Table 14. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 6	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	707
Relatives	355
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	1,062
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	247
TOTAL HOMELESS - REGION 6	1,309

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 10)

Table 15. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 7	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	197
Relatives	174
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	371
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	276
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 7	647

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 29)

Table 16. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 8	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	251
Relatives	246
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	497
UNSHELTERED COUNTS/ESTIMATE	
Count – Unsheltered	139
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 8	636

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 544)

Table 17. TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 9	
SURVEY DATA	
Respondents	253
Relatives	208
Total Survey Data: All Survey Homeless	461
UNSHELTERED COUNT	
Count – Unsheltered	274
TOTAL HOMELESS – REGION 9	735

(Estimated number of unsheltered homeless, that is, of unsheltered individuals and families who were known to be homeless but were in locations where they could not be counted = 0)

KEY SURVEY VARIABLES FOR EACH REGION

Tables 18 through 26 describe key survey variables for each region.

Table 18. Region Respondents – Race and Ethnicity														
	Asian/ Pacific Islander		Native American/ Alaska Native		Black/ African American		White		Mixed race		Other		Hispanic/ Latino	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	4	1.3	15	5.0	2	0.7	247	82.1	23	7.6	10	3.3	36	12.3
Region 2	2	0.6	11	3.4	11	3.4	227	70.9	22	6.9	47	14.7	70	21.9
Region 3	1	0.7	3	2.2	2	1.4	92	66.7	11	8.0	29	21.0	46	32.6
Region 4	1	1.3	7	8.9	0	0.0	69	87.3	1	1.3	1	1.3	5	6.4
Region 5	38	1.0	201	5.3	737	19.3	2067	54.3	342	9.0	425	11.2	1001	24.3
Region 6	7	1.0	26	3.8	72	10.6	455	66.9	58	8.5	62	9.1	108	15.8
Region 7	0	0.0	40	21.5	1	0.5	114	61.3	12	6.5	19	10.2	39	21.9
Region 8	1	0.4	5	2.2	0	0.0	107	46.7	51	22.3	65	28.4	171	69.5
Region 9	0	0.0	8	3.8	8	3.8	141	67.8	24	11.5	27	13.0	83	37.6

Table 19. Region Respondents - Household Composition												
	Single		Single parent w/ child		Part of a couple with child		Part of a couple without child		Grandparent with child		Another situation	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	200	64.5	53	17.1	30	9.7	26	8.4	1	0.3	0	0.0
Region 2	218	55.8	121	30.9	31	7.9	20	5.1	0	0.0	1	0.3
Region 3	76	45.0	55	32.5	27	16.0	9	5.3	0	0.0	2	1.2
Region 4	47	59.5	19	24.1	8	10.1	4	5.1	0	0.0	1	1.3
Region 5	2314	55.8	1201	29.0	406	9.8	187	4.5	9	0.2	27	0.7
Region 6	485	70.3	86	12.5	64	9.3	50	7.2	0	0.0	5	0.7
Region 7	97	52.2	47	25.3	21	11.3	19	10.2	1	0.5	1	0.5
Region 8	131	52.4	47	18.8	45	18.0	23	9.2	3	1.2	1	0.4
Region 9	140	57.4	55	22.5	28	11.5	20	8.2	1	0.4	0	0.0

Table 20. Region Respondents - Working, Chronically Homeless and Disabling Conditions ⁴²														
	Received money from working		Chronically Homeless		Serious Mental Illness		Serious medical or physical condition		Alcohol or drug abuse		Developmental disability		HIV/ AIDS	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	189	61.2	44	13.9	71	22.5	86	27.2	88	27.8	14	4.4	2	0.6
Region 2	261	66.9	39	9.7	111	27.5	95	23.5	108	26.7	27	6.7	2	0.1
Region 3	102	61.4	3	1.8	34	20.1	28	16.6	27	16.0	6	3.6	1	0.6
Region 4	49	62.0	7	8.5	13	15.9	15	18.3	27	32.9	3	3.7	0	0.0
Region 5	2201	53.3	384	9.0	893	21.0	771	18.1	1079	25.3	169	4.0	92	2.2
Region 6	434	63.5	58	8.2	153	21.6	151	21.4	235	33.2	36	5.1	6	0.8
Region 7	107	60.5	17	8.6	33	16.8	43	21.8	51	25.9	14	7.1	1	0.5
Region 8	132	55.2	25	10.0	34	13.5	50	19.9	68	27.1	17	6.8	1	0.4
Region 9	113	45.4	29	11.5	62	24.5	57	22.5	41	16.2	8	3.2	3	1.2

⁴² The following data are the percentage of respondents, by region, that reported having at least one of the serious, disabling conditions.

Region 1: 62.3%	Region 4: 54.9%	Region 7: 51.8%
Region 2: 54.5%	Region 5: 49.0%	Region 8: 47.8%
Region 3: 42.0%	Region 6: 59.7%	Region 9: 43.9%

Table 21. Region Respondents - Receipt of Government Benefits												
	SSI/SSDI		TANF		Food Stamps		VA Pension/Benefits		Medicaid/Medicare		Other benefit	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	42	13.3	7	2.2	96	30.4	13	4.1	51	16.1	20	6.3
Region 2	69	17.1	42	10.4	168	41.6	11	2.7	109	27.0	32	7.9
Region 3	31	18.3	12	7.1	72	42.6	3	1.8	70	41.4	15	8.9
Region 4	11	13.4	7	8.5	42	51.2	3	3.7	24	29.3	2	2.4
Region 5	566	13.3	425	10.0	1373	32.2	103	2.4	835	19.6	299	7.0
Region 6	90	12.7	32	4.5	237	33.5	23	3.3	109	15.4	42	5.9
Region 7	32	16.2	16	8.1	59	29.9	4	2.0	55	27.9	24	12.2
Region 8	41	16.3	11	4.4	101	40.2	8	3.2	39	15.5	18	7.2
Region 9	48	19.0	20	7.9	114	45.1	4	1.6	65	25.7	34	13.4

Table 22. Region Respondents - Why Did You Become Homeless This Time?

	Lost job		Wages too low		Relationship/family breakup		Abuse/ or violence in home		Runaway/throwaway		Discharged from prison	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	83	26.3	36	11.4	74	23.4	32	10.1	3	0.9	18	5.7
Region 2	93	23.0	49	12.1	90	22.3	114	28.2	9	2.2	45	11.1
Region 3	41	24.3	25	14.8	27	16.0	33	19.5	4	2.4	11	6.5
Region 4	18	22.0	14	17.1	7	8.5	8	9.8	4	4.9	7	8.5
Region 5	1135	26.6	594	13.9	737	17.3	421	9.9	84	2.0	369	8.7
Region 6	212	30.0	70	9.9	143	20.2	63	8.9	7	1.0	70	9.9
Region 7	44	22.3	32	16.2	39	19.8	25	12.7	2	1.0	8	4.1
Region 8	46	18.3	51	20.3	54	21.5	26	10.4	2	0.8	17	6.8
Region 9	83	32.8	37	14.6	60	23.7	43	17.0	0	0.0	12	4.7
	Medical problems		Eviction or foreclosure		Housing costs		Couldn't pay utilities		Substance abuse		Mental illness/emotional problems	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	63	19.9	25	7.9	75	23.7	36	11.4	45	14.2	41	13.0
Region 2	51	12.6	61	15.1	106	26.2	49	12.7	52	12.9	62	15.3
Region 3	15	8.9	34	20.1	44	26.0	25	14.8	18	10.7	25	14.8
Region 4	9	11.0	13	15.9	36	43.9	24	29.3	20	24.4	6	7.3
Region 5	477	11.2	414	9.7	1136	26.7	677	15.9	634	14.9	495	11.6
Region 6	79	11.2	73	10.3	124	17.5	65	9.2	152	21.5	74	10.5
Region 7	21	10.7	25	12.7	88	44.7	63	32.0	26	13.2	18	9.1
Region 8	23	9.2	32	12.7	77	30.7	57	22.7	40	15.9	23	9.2
Region 9	43	17.0	23	9.1	67	26.5	51	20.2	25	9.9	48	19.0
	Other reason											
	Count	%										
Region 1	35	11.1										
Region 2	47	11.6										
Region 3	12	7.1										
Region 4	3	3.7										
Region 5	344	8.1										
Region 6	74	10.5										
Region 7	27	13.7										
Region 8	22	8.8										
Region 9	31	12.3										

Table 23. Region Respondents - Services Needed												
	Finding a job		Finding Section 8 housing		Emergency shelter		Food		Rent/ Utility Assistance		Transportation/Bus passes	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	24	7.6	54	17.1	41	13.0	32	10.1	43	13.6	47	14.9
Region 2	86	21.3	157	38.9	56	13.9	79	19.6	89	22.0	91	22.5
Region 3	30	17.8	34	20.1	8	4.7	24	14.2	27	16.0	26	15.4
Region 4	7	8.5	18	22.0	20	24.4	14	17.1	19	23.2	8	9.8
Region 5	769	18.1	1043	24.5	519	12.2	642	15.1	644	15.1	757	17.8
Region 6	137	19.4	133	18.8	75	10.6	115	16.3	128	18.1	123	17.4
Region 7	33	16.8	58	29.4	43	21.8	57	28.9	41	20.8	51	25.9
Region 8	62	24.7	74	29.5	42	16.7	50	19.9	79	31.5	54	21.5
Region 9	74	29.2	70	27.7	45	17.8	52	20.6	80	31.6	60	23.7
	Medical care		Dental care		Mental health care		Substance Abuse treatment		ID/ driver's license		Public benefits	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	41	13.0	39	12.3	22	7.0	13	4.1	35	11.1	29	9.2
Region 2	92	22.8	82	20.3	48	11.9	28	6.9	63	15.6	71	17.6
Region 3	20	11.8	24	14.2	7	4.1	5	3.0	16	9.5	25	14.8
Region 4	13	15.9	10	12.2	7	8.5	7	8.5	5	6.1	6	7.3
Region 5	521	12.2	637	15.0	254	6.0	242	5.7	406	9.5	409	9.6
Region 6	145	20.5	168	23.8	58	8.2	63	8.9	95	13.4	71	10.0
Region 7	36	18.3	31	15.7	11	5.6	14	7.1	16	8.1	21	10.7
Region 8	63	25.1	54	21.5	23	9.2	37	14.7	34	13.5	48	19.1
Region 9	35	13.8	27	10.7	6	2.4	9	3.6	21	8.3	27	10.7
	Child care		Other service									
	Count	%	Count	%								
Region 1	15	4.7	18	5.7								
Region 2	30	7.4	24	5.9								
Region 3	10	5.9	3	1.8								
Region 4	1	1.2	2	2.4								
Region 5	214	5.0	106	2.5								
Region 6	34	4.8	37	5.2								
Region 7	14	7.1	5	2.5								
Region 8	26	10.4	8	3.2								
Region 9	18	7.1	11	4.3								

Table 24. Region All Survey Homeless - Households with Children, Newly Homeless, and Unsheltered Homeless								
	Households with children		Households without children		Newly homeless		Unsheltered homeless	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	216	47.5	239	52.5	133	28.4	126	27.3
Region 2	371	60.1	246	39.9	160	34.6	82	12.8
Region 3	309	77.1	92	22.9	99	24.2	20	5.0
Region 4	92	63.0	54	37.0	28	18.3	31	21.2
Region 5	4868	64.9	2638	35.1	1793	23.1	771	10.0
Region 6	457	44.5	571	55.5	312	29.4	181	17.3
Region 7	205	61.9	126	38.1	62	16.7	118	31.9
Region 8	307	62.7	183	37.3	124	24.9	90	18.4
Region 9	257	59.2	177	40.8	80	17.4	115	25.0

Table 25. Region All Survey Homeless - Household Composition												
	Single		Single parent w/ child		Part of a couple with child		Part of a couple without child		Grandparent with child		Another situation	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	205	44.4	123	26.6	91	19.7	41	8.9	2	0.4	0	0.0
Region 2	233	37.2	277	44.2	88	14.1	27	4.3	0	0.0	1	0.2
Region 3	83	20.3	166	40.6	140	34.2	18	4.4	0	0.0	2	0.5
Region 4	50	33.3	58	38.7	34	22.7	7	4.7	0	0.0	1	0.7
Region 5	2430	31.9	3295	43.3	1504	19.8	328	4.3	30	0.4	27	0.4
Region 6	5.3	48.3	253	24.3	196	18.8	84	8.1	0	0.0	6	0.6
Region 7	105	30.1	123	35.2	79	22.6	37	10.6	3	0.9	2	0.6
Region 8	143	28.9	118	23.9	175	35.4	43	8.7	14	2.8	1	0.2
Region 9	155	34.5	145	32.3	109	24.3	37	8.2	3	0.7	0	0.0

Table 26. Region All Survey Homeless – Type of Place, Monday Night												
	Emergency shelter		Domestic violence shelter		On the street		Hotel/ motel paid by self		Hotel/ motel paid by others		Youth shelter	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	86	18.7	13	2.8	126	27.3	8	1.7	2	0.4	2	0.4
Region 2	80	12.4	40	6.2	82	12.8	29	4.5	13	2.0	0	0.0
Region 3	54	13.6	10	2.5	20	5.0	6	1.5	4	1.0	0	0.0
Region 4	7	4.8	1	0.7	31	21.2	1	0.7	1	0.7	0	0.0
Region 5	1434	18.7	197	2.6	771	10.0	398	5.2	230	3.0	35	0.5
Region 6	165	15.8	19	1.8	181	17.3	54	5.2	8	0.8	14	1.3
Region 7	28	7.6	6	1.6	118	31.9	25	6.8	14	3.8	1	0.3
Region 8	26	5.3	5	1.0	90	18.4	16	3.3	25	5.1	0	0.0
Region 9	51	11.1	23	5.0	115	25.0	8	1.7	14	3.0	0	0.0
	Temporarily with family/ friends		Farm labor camp or dorm		Psychiatric hospital		Medical hospital		Substance abuse treatment program		Jail	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Region 1	92	20.0	0	0.0	5	1.1	1	0.2	2	0.4	29	6.3
Region 2	168	26.1	0	0.0	1	0.2	2	0.3	1	0.2	13	2.0
Region 3	79	19.8	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.5	2	0.5
Region 4	65	44.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Region 5	1776	23.1	14	0.2	33	0.4	17	0.2	160	2.1	33	0.4
Region 6	182	17.4	5	0.5	5	0.5	4	0.4	33	3.2	6	0.6
Region 7	113	30.5	6	1.6	0	0.0	2	0.5	5	1.4	9	2.4
Region 8	242	49.4	25	5.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	2.4
Region 9	136	29.6	7	1.5	1	0.2	3	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.2
	Prison		Juvenile detention		Transitional housing		Somewhere else					
	Count		Count		Count		Count					
Region 1	0	0.0	3	0.7	84	18.2	8	1.7				
Region 2	0	0.0	1	0.2	173	26.9	40	6.2				
Region 3	0	0.0	1	0.3	147	36.9	72	18.1				
Region 4	2	1.4	0	0.0	27	18.5	11	7.5				
Region 5	3	0.0	18	0.2	2381	31.0	172	2.2				
Region 6	0	0.0	1	0.1	321	30.7	47	4.5				
Region 7	0	0.0	0	0.0	38	10.3	5	1.4				
Region 8	5	1.0	0	0.0	39	8.0	5	1.0				
Region 9	0	0.0	0	0.0	75	16.3	26	5.7				

PART VI. SUMMARY

SURVEYS TYPICALLY UNDERCOUNT THE HOMELESS

- In Colorado, on a summer night in August 2006, an estimated 16,203 people were homeless, many of them children aged twelve years and younger.⁴³ As disturbing as this number is, we know it is conservative.

The one consistent finding in all the research on homelessness is that surveys undercount the homeless. It is particularly difficult to count those homeless who are unsheltered.⁴⁴ The total number of homeless individuals fluctuates over time. People who are homeless typically move in and out of homelessness as conditions in their life change. Data collected during one day of the year only represents a snapshot of homelessness on that day.

- This study designed tracking forms to estimate the number of unsheltered homeless persons that were unable to complete surveys. The tracking forms indicate that homeless persons were undercounted. Of the 596 agencies and volunteers that submitted tracking forms, 46 percent or 273 provided both the number of persons surveyed and an estimate of the number served in a typical week in August, 2006. Of this group, fully 75 percent reported that they served more homeless persons than they had surveyed.⁴⁵ (See Appendix 6 for tracking form).
- More broadly, research in Colorado indicates that service use differs by community. In some communities, substantial proportions of the homeless, including homeless street persons, are service users. In other communities, they are not.⁴⁶ Homeless persons are most likely to seek services from persons and agencies that specialize in helping the homeless such as shelters, food lines and health clinics for homeless persons, rather than more general social services such as welfare or food stamps.⁴⁷ Colorado's last homeless count in 1990 found that homeless persons in Denver had a relatively high rate of service usage. However, some homeless persons do not seek services, and the pattern reported may have changed over time or, at a minimum, not hold for the rest of the state.

⁴³ See footnote 3.

⁴⁴ For example, "Number of Homeless Ohioans," Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, 8/27/02; "Report on Homelessness in North Dakota, March 2005" (p. 15); S.J. Farrell and E.D. Reissing, "Picking Up the Challenge: Developing a Methodology to Enumerate and Assess the Needs of the Street Homeless Population," *Evaluation Review*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April 2004, pp. 144-155.

⁴⁵ Only a small number provided both a count of the unsheltered homeless and an estimate of the number of unsheltered homeless staying in that location during a typical week in August, 2006. For this reason, the estimated number of unsheltered homeless were not compared to the number counted. Ten percent said that the number surveyed and the number served was identical. Sixteen percent – 43 agencies or volunteers – said that they typically served fewer homeless persons than they had surveyed. These locations probably made a serious effort to survey un-served homeless persons.

⁴⁶ Franklin J. James. (1991), see footnote 2.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

- Some groups may be underrepresented among service users, including youth, recently homeless persons, and persons who are doubled up with friends and family.⁴⁸ Many homeless persons may choose to hide themselves from public view. Homeless persons who do not use services and are not living in known street locations cannot be counted.
- Homeless shelters and other services for the homeless are concentrated in urban areas. There is evidence that the homeless population is underestimated in rural areas and other locations where there are few or no homeless services.⁴⁹
- Seasonal differences impact point-in-time counts. Few states or communities have conducted summer homeless counts, because the Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that states and communities conduct a point-in-time survey the last week of January. However, researchers agree that homelessness varies from month to month and seasonally. Specifically, the use of shelters is far higher in winter than in summer.⁵⁰ This makes it easier to locate and survey homeless persons. There may be other seasonal differences as well; for example, it is expected that families with children seek services during the school year, but less so during the summer months.

MANY OF COLORADO'S HOMELESS ARE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- **Children and teens** comprised one-third of Colorado's homeless in the *Colorado Statewide Homeless Count, August 2006*.
- More than six in 10 homeless persons were part of a **household with children**.
- One-quarter of all **unsheltered homeless** were families with children.
- Most **newly homeless** households were comprised of women and children.

There were dramatic differences in where people in households with and without children spent the night of Colorado's homeless count. Many more families with children stayed in transitional housing or temporarily with family or friends while looking for permanent housing than did people in households without children. Single individuals and couples without children more often stayed in emergency shelters or slept on the street.

- Across the country, households with children are one of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population. Overall, poverty and the lack of affordable housing are the principal causes of family homelessness; specifically, declining wages, limited public benefits, high cost or lack of health insurance, and domestic violence account for increasing family poverty leading to homelessness. Homelessness is a traumatic and terrifying experience. Many families are unable to stay together; homeless persons often have serious health problems directly related to their lack of housing; and children suffer long-term effects on their physical and emotional health including diminished educational performance and difficulties in school.
- Domestic violence is the immediate cause of homelessness for many women and children. Many domestic violence victims are forced into choosing between staying with

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ Urban Institute. "America's Homeless II: Populations and Services." February 1, 2000.

⁵⁰ For example, Rossi, *et al*, *The Condition of the Homeless in Chicago*, (Amherst, MA: Social and Demographic Research Institute, University of Massachusetts at Amherst), 1986.

their abuser and sleeping on the street. Affordable housing is crucial to their ability to leave the shelter system without returning to an unsafe situation.⁵¹

- Although the *Colorado Statewide Homeless Count, August 2006* study did not differentiate teens who were homeless and unaccompanied by a parent, nationally, unaccompanied homeless youth account for 3 percent of the urban homeless population.⁵² This percent is growing as many more youth are leaving juvenile justice, mental health facilities, and foster care systems.⁵³ Youth are rarely housed in emergency shelters due to a lack of shelter beds for youth and shelter admission policies. Because they are underage, it is difficult for them to earn enough money to meet basic needs. Many adolescents find they must exchange sex for food, clothing and shelter in order to survive. As a result, these young people are at a much greater risk of health issues such as HIV/AIDS than adolescents in shelter.⁵⁴ Homeless youth often suffer from anxiety, depression, poor health and nutrition, and low self-esteem, and most face difficulties successfully completing school.⁵⁵

HALF OF ALL RESPONDENTS HAD AT LEAST ONE SERIOUS, DISABLING CONDITION

- Half of all survey respondents had at least one serious, disabling condition: serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, a developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS.

Research shows that homeless people suffer from high rates of mental and physical health problems and are far more likely to suffer from chronic health issues (such as asthma), exacerbated by the stressful and chaotic nature of their living conditions. Many homeless people have multiple health problems, some as a direct result of being homeless, such as frostbite, upper respiratory infections and ulcers, and that the homeless are at greater risk of severe injury due to violence. These conditions are extremely difficult to treat or control if persons lack adequate housing.⁵⁶

Individuals experiencing high rates of mental illness and substance abuse often have difficulty carrying out basic tasks. Homeless people with mental disorders remain homeless for longer periods and have less contact with their families and friends. People suffering from alcohol, drug or mental health problems encounter more barriers to employment, tend to be in poorer physical health, and have more contact with the legal system. These conditions require ongoing access to a full range of treatment and rehabilitation services.

⁵¹ The National Center on Family Homelessness. "Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women."
<http://www.familyhomelessness.org/pdf/fact_violence.pdf>

⁵² U.S. Conference of Mayors. *A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities: 2005*. Washington, D.C.

⁵³ National Alliance to End Homelessness. "Youth." <http://naeh.org/section/policyfocusareas/youth>; National Coalition for the Homeless. "Homeless Youth, NCH Fact Sheet #13." June, 2006

⁵⁴ National Network for Youth. *Toolkit for Youth Workers: Fact Sheet. Runaway and Homeless Youth*. 1998. Washington, D.C.

⁵⁵ NCH Fact Sheet #13, see footnote 53.

⁵⁶ NCH Fact Sheet #8, see footnote 24.

NEARLY ONE IN TEN WERE CHRONICALLY HOMELESS

- Nearly one in ten homeless individuals in Colorado were chronically homeless; the great majority were male.

Chronic homelessness is long-term or repeated homelessness, accompanied by a serious condition or disability, and it is characterized by people living in an emergency shelter or in a place not suitable for human habitation. Many people experience homelessness for a short period of time. A smaller number of homeless persons experience homelessness for months or years, and cycle between homelessness, hospitals, jails, shelters, and treatment facilities; these people are considered chronically homeless. Although the chronically homeless make up a small segment of all homeless persons, its effects are considerable. In systems and facilities, chronically homeless individuals' unique needs are not efficiently met, and they are very expensive to public systems of care as well. Providing permanent supportive housing or "housing first" programs has shown positive results. When people are placed in permanent supportive housing, the public cost to the health care, criminal justice, emergency shelter and other systems can decline dramatically, and outcomes (e.g., better mental and physical health, greater income, fewer arrests and better progress toward self-sufficiency) are often more positive.⁵⁷

MANY ARE LIVING ON THE EDGE OF HOMELESSNESS

- The survey data collected for this study strongly suggest that the majority of the 1,577 respondents (and their family members) who were classified as **"not homeless"** are living on the edge of homelessness.

Homelessness not only affects the very poor, but also working and middle class individuals and families. Americans are homeless primarily because they cannot pay for housing and are increasingly unable to afford to buy or even rent their homes. They face the national trends of low wages, declining public assistance programs, and limited affordable housing. The *Colorado Statewide Homeless Count, August 2006* reports that the most common reasons given for homelessness were housing-related costs, loss of a job, and having one or more serious, disabling conditions; survey respondents most frequently said they needed permanent housing.

It is impossible to know the precise number of people who are homeless. In the words of a tireless homeless advocate and formerly homeless person, "If there is more than one who does not wish to be out in the wilderness or stuck in a shelter, and we can change this equation, then the number is too great a burden on our consciousness."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ National Alliance to End Homelessness. Chronic Homelessness Brief, July 2006.

⁵⁸ Randle Loeb.

PART VII. METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION: THE INITIAL STAKEHOLDERS

The Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH) initiated Colorado's August 2006 homeless count, which was primarily led by the Colorado Division of Housing (CDH). The project included active participation and collaboration from numerous agencies, organizations, and individuals, including the Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA); Colorado Coalition for the Homeless; Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs, Colorado Department of Human Services, Adams County Housing Authority; Volunteers of America; Posada; Fannie Mae; Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative; United Way; Rocky Mountain Housing Development Corporation, and homeless advocates. Individuals from these organizations formed the Housing Subcommittee Group for the Statewide Count (Housing Subcommittee).

CHFA, CDH, the Daniels Fund, and Fannie Mae funded the project and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless agreed to serve as the fiscal agent. By January 2006, it was clear there were sufficient dollars, community interest and support for conducting the summer homeless count.

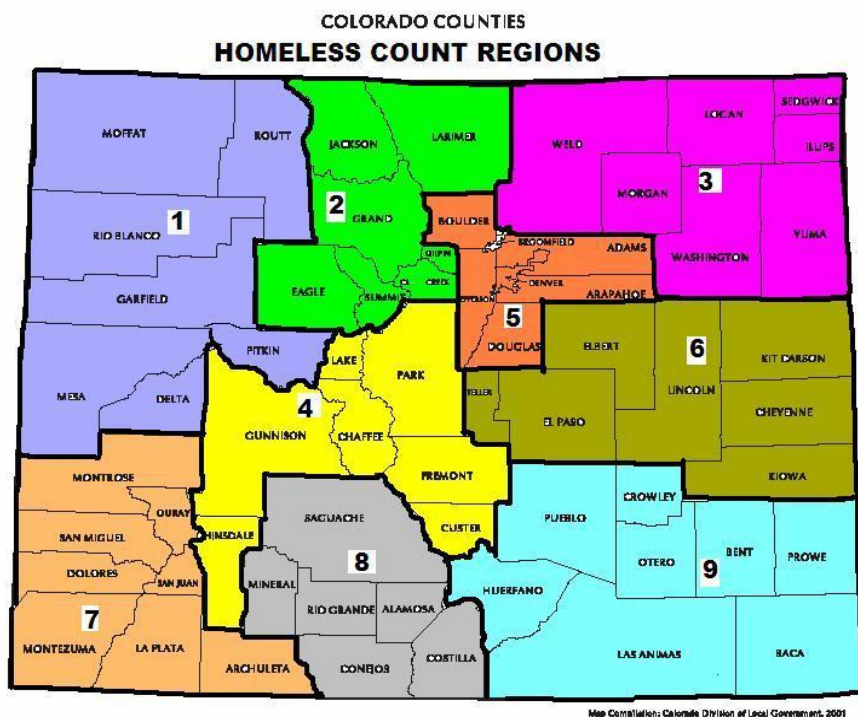
PRELIMINARY WORK

Pre planning

At the start of the project, the Colorado Division of Housing dedicated time and resources to develop a preliminary understanding of what homelessness looked like across the state. This effort helped clarify some of the organizational issues of conducting a count, as well as inform the appropriate use of scarce resources.

CDH recruited a student intern from the University of Colorado at Denver with an interest in homeless research. The intern contacted homeless organizations in Colorado to gain an understanding of the homeless population in each county. Based on this information, the intern was able to develop a preliminary map of homelessness in the various counties and regions, which served as the basis for identifying agencies serving various homeless populations.

CICH sent a letter via email and post to hundreds of state and local organizations, informing them of the date and purpose of the homeless count, and asking them for their assistance. Many different organizations were asked to be involved in this project, including law enforcement, housing authorities, housing development organizations, homeless shelters, transitional housing, food banks and soup kitchens, treatment and rehabilitation facilities, health care organizations including mental health centers, prisons, National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management offices, departments of human and social services, health departments, county and municipal officials, faith based organizations, family centers, domestic violence shelters, workforce centers, school districts, veterans groups, justice centers, migrant service agencies, United Way organizations, and Tribal organizations.



In May and June, 2006, prior to the homeless count, a web-based pre-survey was sent to rural agencies serving homeless individuals. The purpose of the survey was two-fold: 1) to gain information on the nature of homelessness in rural Colorado, and 2) to identify agencies and volunteers willing to help with the count. The pre-survey collected the following information for each region:

- Identification of local agencies
- Identification of potential volunteers
- Estimates of the number of unsheltered homeless
- Locations where the unsheltered homeless stay at night

Using multiple lists provided by CDH and the responses to the pre-survey, a master list of agencies was created and sorted by county within each region. These lists were provided to each regional coordinator in July. Coordinators also received a list of locations where unsheltered homeless stay at night, collected via the pre-survey.

Geographic Distribution: Continuums of Care and Regions

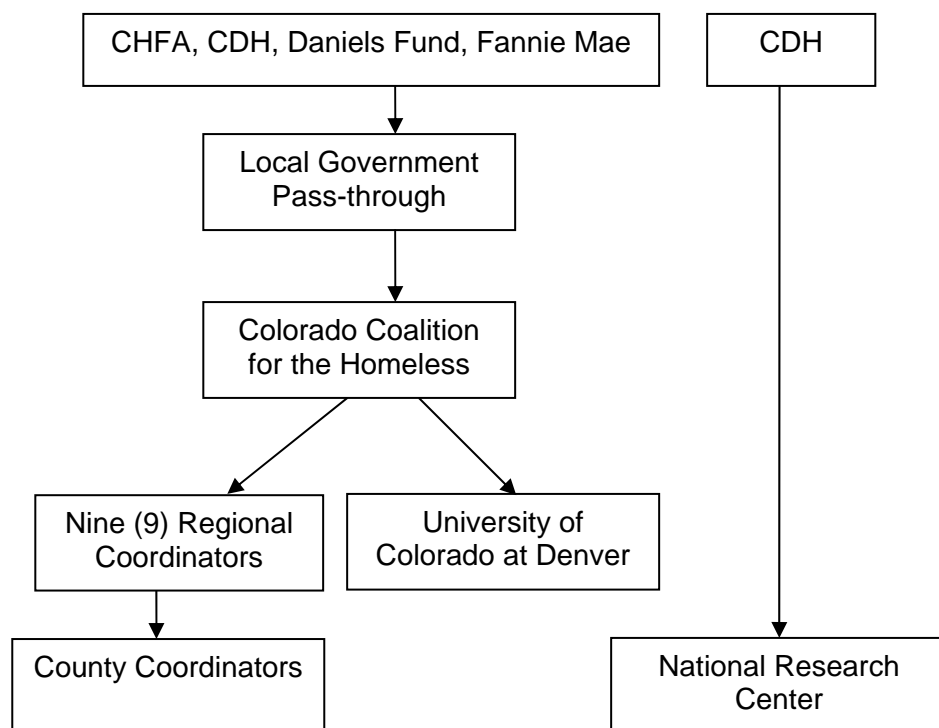
Initially, the Housing Subcommittee members looked at the possibility of using Continuum of Care sub-regions to conduct planned project activities.

However, they quickly discovered that there were both financial and practical drawbacks to that organizational structure. Using geography, topography and communities of interest, the Housing Subcommittee subdivided the state into nine regions. Please refer to Table 8 for a list of the regions and counties.

The statewide homeless count process relied heavily on these regions throughout the point-in-time planning, coordination and survey administration process. The map helped participants visualize the state and emphasized areas that needed organizational help and attention (see Appendix 1 for a full-page regional map).

Organizational Structure

The complexity of the project and number of funders and participating agencies presented enormous challenges. The following flowchart reflects both the organizational and funding structure.



Collaboration

The Statewide Homeless Count required a phenomenal amount of collaboration. Throughout every phase of the project, participants exhibited consistent patience, dedication and skill in resolving issues and reconciling differing opinions. The primary planners at CDH are commended for their ceaseless commitment to the value of inclusion and to their leadership in providing a respectful environment for everyone involved. For example, in the early stages of the planning, the Housing Subcommittee began working with both urban and rural homeless service agencies in an effort to understand issues that differ in urban and rural areas, including issues of seasonality in determining homelessness. Rural areas reported higher incidence of homelessness in summer than winter, while urban areas have more homeless persons during winter. Rural agencies requested a shorter survey form, while urban areas wanted the survey to be similar to the one that has been used in previous years in Metro Denver. Due to very different needs, perceptions, experiences and expectations, it took nearly ten months to reach agreement on a draft survey.

Coordinators

CDH staff recruited nine regional and 64 county coordinators from human/social service agencies, housing authorities, homeless shelters, domestic violence agencies, county governments, and volunteers. The Housing Subcommittee also hired a statewide coordinator to manage the regional and county coordinators.

The dedicated group of regional and county coordinators were responsible for extensive organizing, planning and recruiting.

- Regional coordinators took the lead for their designated region of the state, coordinating all regional homeless count activities including educating agencies and the public regarding the homeless count. This included recruiting volunteers, providing training for volunteers and agency staff, and assisting the statewide coordinator with logistics of training and homeless count activities. The regional coordinators also helped coordinate the project's debriefing activities -- evaluation and wrap-up of the survey process with the regional, county, and local community -- and were responsible for submitting completed surveys to CDH. (See Appendix 2 for the Regional Coordinator Job Description).
- The county coordinators also contributed untold hours to the project through coordinating the recruitment of local survey field representatives in the county (agency, nonprofits, departments of human services, housing authorities, law enforcement, and faith-based groups). These activities included identifying participating agencies, assisting with the planning and coordination for the county, assisting the regional coordinator with training logistics, coordinating with agencies to assess the need for survey administrators, and acting as a resource for necessary tasks on the day of the count. County coordinators also coordinated the actual survey process within the county to ensure consistency regarding handling of surveys during distribution and data collection. They submitted all completed surveys to the regional coordinators and assisted with debriefing activities. (See Appendix 3 for the County Coordinator Job Description).

Counties/Agencies/Volunteers

Coordination of agencies and volunteers occurred primarily at the county and local level. Hundreds of agencies participated in collecting data and distributing the survey. Agency staff and volunteers from government programs, non-profit organizations, supportive service and food distribution programs, meal sites and faith-based organizations literally worked thousands of hours to help organize the count in their area, recruit additional volunteers, and disseminate and collect surveys, among many other tasks. All but three Colorado counties participated in the statewide point-in-time survey and count. Twelve counties did not submit any surveys but did submit tracking forms, indicating that they tried to participate but did not serve any homeless clients during the relevant time. Of these twelve counties, one submitted a homeless count.

Consultants

The Housing Subcommittee contracted with the Center for Education Policy Analysis (CEPA)/the Centers for Public/Private Sector Cooperation (CPPSC), Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center (UCDHSC) and the

National Research Center, Inc. (NRC). CEPA/CPPSC's primary role was to develop the point in time methodology, analyze data, and write a comprehensive final report. NRC primarily served as the statewide project coordinator.

CEPA/CPPSC was instrumental in revising the survey instrument and developing the suggested data collection methodology, and for analyzing the data and producing the final report. In collaboration with NRC and volunteers, CEPA/CPPSC conducted a pilot test of the revised survey. CEPA/CPPSC and NRC developed a tracking form to document information about survey administration and provide a means for communities to count and estimate unsheltered homeless persons. The data collection methodology and the use of the tracking form are covered in subsequent sections of this report.

In collaboration with NRC, CEPA/CPPSC developed an extensive training module and materials, delivered trainings, and developed a "train-the-trainer" protocol and PowerPoint presentation for regional coordinators to use in delivering trainings to volunteers and agency staff in their local communities. CEPA/CPPSC and NRC created a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to distribute via email as well as posting on the website. Due to CEPA's previous experience in homeless issues, research, and point-in-time studies, CEPA and CPSSC were able to provide general technical assistance throughout the project.

NRC provided the extensive coordination necessary for such a statewide effort, and they facilitated communication and information exchange among key stakeholders throughout the project. NRC drafted and conducted the web-based pre-survey and compiled and distributed the master list of agencies providing homeless services in Colorado. Using multiple lists provided by CDH and the responses to the pre-survey, NRC created a checklist for coordinators to remind them of all the tasks necessary for a successful count. NRC also conducted numerous trainings throughout the state. As mentioned above, NRC collaborated with CEPA/CPPSC on survey revision, the survey pilot and the development of all training materials. It also provided valuable assistance in creating and reviewing various sections of the logistics documents.

Instrument Development

The Housing Subcommittee and other key stakeholders began with earlier point-in-time surveys, such as ones used by MDHI's point-in-time counts. They reviewed the challenges identified in the previous surveys. Over a ten-month period, stakeholders reviewed the survey questions, length of survey, and the previously collected data to determine the content of the survey, and worked to simplify and improve the instrument. These meetings were widely publicized and many individuals and organizations had input in the development of the survey. Working through the development and revision of the survey instrument was difficult and time consuming, as numerous dedicated stakeholders held disparate points of view. The necessity to honor everyone's voice required patience and perseverance to finalize the survey.

Researchers, with the help of volunteers, conducted a pilot of the draft survey in the summer of 2006. The survey pilot was completed in emergency shelters and soup kitchens along the Front Range. Based on this pilot, minor adjustments in wording and formatting were necessary. Once the Subcommittee had a final document, CPPSC translated the survey into Spanish.

DEVELOPING THE METHODOLOGY

Methodology was developed with the intention of producing an accurate point-in-time count of Colorado's homeless population. Providing training; conducting interviews, rather than having respondents complete surveys on their own; interviewing one adult family member in each family group; and, following procedures to avoid duplication were methods emphasized with all agency staff and volunteers who participated in the project

Survey Administration

Each county coordinator created a master list of all locations where homeless persons stayed at night. Counties and local agencies used this list in planning their process on the night and day of the point-in-time count. They also identified whether native language speakers would be needed and at which locations.

On the night of Monday, August 28, 2006, as soon as shelters closed their doors for the night and all homeless individuals had entered the facility, the survey process began. Unsheltered street surveys, counts and/or estimates also started on Monday night. Agencies offering day services began their participation in the survey process at the start of business on Tuesday, August 29, 2006, and continued until the close of business on that day. The survey data were collected primarily on the night of Monday, August 28 and Tuesday, August 29, referencing the point-in-time as the night of Monday, August 28. Agencies that were not open on Monday night or Tuesday day collected data on the first day of the week that they served clients. Agency staff and volunteers attempted to survey every homeless individual or, in the case of family groups and couples, one adult family member in all of the identified locations.

Training

Researchers consistently stressed the importance of following specific data collection procedures to produce an accurate count. Training, interviewing (vs. respondents self-administering the survey), and following procedures to avoid duplication were the most critical elements in increasing the accuracy of the statewide homeless count. Enormous resources were spent on training agency staff and volunteers in survey administration and data collection procedures, including completing, administering and checking surveys. CEPA/CPPSC and NRC developed extensive training materials that were distributed to participants in training sessions and made available on the website. All training materials may be found in Appendix 7. The training materials are:

- Agency Referral List
- Contact Sheet
- County Coordinator Checklist
- DV Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- General Survey Training
- HIPAA release
- Homeless Definition
- Interviewer Script
- Logistics
- Methods for Producing an Accurate Count
- Sample Day of Count Packet

- Statewide Survey Instructions
- Survey (English & Spanish)
- Survey Cover Sheet
- Tracking Form for Counts/Estimates

NRC, CEPA/CPPSC, and CDH conducted “Train-the-Trainer” trainings in Broomfield and Colorado Springs, and NRC conducted sessions in Grand Junction and Durango. These sessions gave coordinators and other interested organizations and individuals the information they needed to deliver trainings to agency staff and volunteers in their own counties and communities. NRC conducted eight regional trainings; regional and county coordinators provided trainings to organizations and individuals in their own communities. Tables 27 and 28 provide a list of training sessions and attendance for trainings held from June through August 2006.

Table 27. Trainings Conducted by NRC⁵⁹		
Trainings	Date	Attendance
Train the Trainer – Broomfield	June 28, 2006	24
Train the Trainer – Colorado Springs	June 29, 2006	9
Train the Trainer – Grand Junction	July 10, 2006	15
Train the Trainer – Durango	July 24, 2006	5
Region 1 - Glenwood Springs	July 19, 2006	7
Region 2 – Granby	July 27, 2006	9
Region 3 - Greeley	July 21, 2006	3
Region 4 – Buena Vista	July 25, 2006	8
Region 6 – Colorado Springs	August 16, 2006	12
Region 7 – Durango	July 24, 2006	10
Region 8 – Alamosa	July 20, 2006	21
Region 9 – Pueblo	August 15, 2006	16
Total Trained		139

⁵⁹ The first two trainings were conducted jointly by CEPA and NRC.

Table 28. Trainings Conducted by Regional and County Coordinators			
Region	Number of Trainings	Location	Attendance
Region 1	2	Delta County	2
	3	Garfield County	26
	2	Mesa County	12
	2	Routt County	7
Region 2	8	Larimer County	50
	1	Summit County	13
Region 3	2	Logan County	11
	1	Morgan County	2
	(number unavailable) xx	Weld County	(number unavailable) xx
Region 4	2	Gunnison County	7
	2	Park County	3
Region 5	3	Adams County	15
	2	Arapahoe County	29
	5	Boulder County	52
	2	Broomfield County	22
	1	Denver County	30
	3	Douglas County	7
	2	Jefferson County	15
	17 (one-on-one)	Jefferson County	17
Region 6	4	El Paso County	45
	1	Teller County	11
Region 7	6	La Plata County	28
	2	Montrose County	(number unavailable) xx
	1	Archuleta County	(number unavailable) xx
Region 8	1	Alamosa County	13
Region 9	1	Las Animas County	13
	1	Pueblo County	9
	1	Otero County	5
Total	75		444

Tracking Forms

CEPA/CPPSC developed a tracking form to be attached to surveys from each location to document the number of submitted surveys. The form also included the agency/organization's name, the specific location (city/town and county, or geographic location), the date the surveys were conducted, and whether the respondents were interviewed or completed the survey without staff assistance.

Researchers wanted to provide counties the opportunity to submit counts and estimates of unsheltered homeless persons whom it was not possible to interview. On the tracking form, agencies were asked to estimate the proportion of their agency's clients who are homeless, and the number of unduplicated homeless clients they serve during a typical week in August, 2006. If agencies or volunteers gave a count or an estimate of the unsheltered homeless, they were asked to estimate the number of unduplicated homeless clients who stay at that given location in a typical week in August, 2006. Researchers planned to use this information to provide an estimate of the nature of undercounting Colorado's homeless population.

Submitting Surveys

Tracking forms were attached to completed surveys for each location. Agencies and volunteers were instructed to submit surveys and tracking forms from each location to their county coordinator within one or two days after the surveys were completed. County coordinators were responsible for collecting surveys. They were to keep a master list of all agencies and volunteers to whom they gave packets of surveys and tracking forms, and to document that they received packets from everyone after the survey process was completed. All surveys were submitted to regional coordinators, who were instructed to keep a master list of all of their county coordinators to be certain they received county-level packets from all of them. Regional coordinators were asked to deliver all packets of completed surveys and tracking forms to CDH by September 13, although some surveys were not received until the end of September. If packets were sent via Federal Express or certified U.S. mail, regional coordinators were instructed to copy every survey and tracking form prior to mailing.

Data Entry

Every returned survey was entered into a pre-designed database. Detailed data entry directions were written for the data processing firm to ensure that data were entered correctly. The tracking form and survey data were entered into two separate databases, and instructions included both general and question-specific directions (see Appendix 9 for detailed data entry instructions).

Entering every survey accomplished several things. First, it provided the opportunity to use a consistent, documented procedure for identifying homeless individuals and families. Second, it provided information about the nature of duplicated surveys. Third, it provided information about individuals and families who did not meet the rigorous criteria for homelessness but who, nevertheless, were at serious risk of becoming homeless.

Data Cleaning

Numerous procedures were performed to clean the data and to check for data entry and logic errors, including:

- Running frequencies on all variables to check for out of range/incorrect values;
- Correcting missing or out of range values for cities and counties when possible;
- Performing logic checks comparing household situation and information about homeless relatives; and,
- Performing additional logic checks to assess the consistency of responses.

Coding Open-Ended Questions

The first step in dealing with the completed surveys was to code all of the open-ended information, *i.e.*, categorizing respondents' written responses.. For each open-ended question, this involved assigning a numeric code to each unique response. CEPA/CPPSC research consultants coded the first several hundred surveys, and then trained graduate students to code the remaining surveys. The researchers supervised the coding.

In cases where there were inconsistencies and/or missed questions on a survey, the coders were instructed not to fix them; the researchers dealt with inconsistent data during the data analysis phase. However, the coders were encouraged to talk with each other in situations where they were not sure how to code a response. When a problem could not be solved as a group, they asked the researchers for help. In general, coders were told to err on the side of caution and to assign responses that did not fit neatly into an already established category as a new category. This is the most conservative approach to coding; researchers can combine categories during the analysis stage, but cannot separate them into more categories after they have been coded.

- For questions that asked for a single response and included an “other” category – for example, Q7, “Which one category best describes your racial background?” the coders had special directions. If the response written in on the “other” line matched one of the close-ended response choices for the question, coders were told to: (1) cross out the check mark on the “other” line, (2) cross out the other response, and (3) circle the number associated with the correct, matching close-ended response. These directions also applied to Q8 (“What is your situation”), Q11 (“How is this person related to you”), and Q13 (“Where will you/where did you spend the night of Monday, August 28th”).
- For Q25 (“Why did you become homeless this time”) and Q26 (“In the past month, what services did you or anyone in your family need but could NOT get”), respondents were instructed to check all the responses that applied. For these questions, if someone wrote in a response on the “other” line, and the “other” response matched one of the choices for the question, they were told to follow the same procedure explained above.
- Coders were given special directions for Q22: “Do you think you have, or have you been told you have: (Read each line and CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)”. The response choices to Q22 are, serious mental illness, serious medical or physical condition, alcohol or drug abuse, developmental disability, HIV/AIDS, and other (describe). This question was difficult to code because many respondents wrote in descriptions of emotional and medical conditions. Therefore, the research consultants developed a special set of directions so that coders could determine if an “other” response fit one of the close-ended categories for Q22. Since the response to Q22 is a necessary component of determining if someone is chronically homeless, it was important that all “other” responses that fit one of the close-ended categories be coded into those categories. Only responses that did NOT fit a listed category were assigned a number..

Eliminating Duplicate Surveys

In past Metro Denver point-in-time studies, the survey process lasted for 5 days. The summer 2006 Colorado Point in Time survey was conducted over a 24-hour period in order to reduce the

number of duplicate surveys.⁶⁰ The short window was instrumental in reducing the incidence of duplication when compared to previous studies.

However, duplicates are inevitable when surveys are self-administered, administered to large numbers of persons in a given setting, or administered in many different settings. CEPA/CPPSC took several steps to address this issue.

- Agency staff, volunteers and homeless persons were instructed to complete only one survey for each homeless individual or family
- The survey instrument contained a question asking respondents if they or another family member already completed a survey
- Agency staff and volunteers were trained regarding the critical nature of obtaining the respondent's initials, age, birth month and gender.

CEPA/CPPSC researchers created a unique identification number for each respondent by linking the following six variables: first initial, middle initial, first three letters of the last name, birth month, age, and gender. For respondents with complete identifying information, or with only one variable missing in the identifier, a survey was classified as a duplicate if it met all three of the following conditions:

- the unique identifiers matched exactly;
- the surveys were submitted by the same agency; and,
- the agency was located in an urban area (because the caseload in these areas is large enough that volunteers may have interviewed the same person more than once.)

If the unique identifiers matched exactly but the surveys were completed in different counties that were either contiguous or located close to each other, then researchers considered other variables in determining duplication, including language, military service, ethnicity, race, and the city and county in which the respondent spent the night. In some cases, researchers looked at responses to a number of other questions before making a decision. A total of 134 surveys were identified as duplicates and were eliminated. Of these, 120 duplicates had complete identifying information, 12 were missing middle initial and two were missing birth month.

Although the survey included a question about whether the respondent had already completed a survey, this question was not answered consistently enough to be useful. The creation and use of the unique identifier was more reliable and more helpful in eliminating duplicate surveys.

Persons who completed duplicate surveys were predominantly single (82%) and had spent the night in an emergency shelter (45%). Fully three-quarters (77%) were male, and most were white (71%). The great majority (80%) said they spent the night in Metro Denver.

⁶⁰ Another reason for limiting the survey to a 24-hour period was to be responsive to the needs and concerns of many rural counties and communities. These communities did not have the capacity to conduct a survey over a longer period of time.

Eliminating Not Homeless

Based on previous experience with point-in-time homeless studies, the research consultants established clearly defined, objective criteria for homelessness. All survey respondents were identified as either “homeless” or “not homeless” based on these criteria.

Determining whether a respondent was homeless initially depended on the response to Q13: “Where will you/did you spend the night of Monday, August 28?” As needed, other questions also were included in the decision process.

A respondent was classified as homeless if s/he spent the night of Monday, August 28 in one of the following locations:

- Emergency shelter
- Domestic violence shelter
- On the street, under a bridge, abandoned building, public building, car, traveling on a bus, camping out, etc.
- Hotel/motel paid for by yourself while looking for housing
- Hotel/motel paid for by others/vouchers
- Youth shelter
- Transitional housing (time-limited)

Nearly one in four respondents (22.7%) said that they spent the night of Monday, August 28 “temporarily with family or friends.” Persons who stayed with family or friends were considered homeless if they indicated that they were “couch surfing,” that is, that the arrangement was not permanent. Specifically, they were classified as homeless if they gave at least one of the following responses:

- “Do you have an arrangement to stay there permanently?” (Q13_8) “no” or “don’t know”
- “Do you have a permanent place to live?” (Q12) “no” or “don’t know”
- “In the next week, are you being evicted or thrown out of the place you are now staying?” (Q14) “yes” or “don’t know”

The 606 survey respondents who said that they spent the night of Monday, August 28 in “permanent supportive housing” were automatically classified as NOT homeless.

For respondents who stayed in other locations, the CEPA/CPPSC consultants looked at additional questions to determine homelessness. This process was complicated by the fact that many surveys showed a lack of consistency in response to questions that indicated whether a respondent was homeless. In these situations, the consultants looked at all responses indicating housing status, and developed further criteria to sort respondents consistently. Specifically, consultants looked at responses to three additional survey questions: Q15, Q16 and Q25. All three questions gave the respondent the option of saying that s/he was not homeless. If responses to at least two of these three questions indicated that the respondent was homeless, then s/he was counted as homeless. Some respondents provided incomplete information. In these cases, researchers reviewed each survey and made a decision about homeless status based on all relevant, complete data.

The above procedures resulted in all respondents being classified as “homeless” or “not homeless.” Overall, consistently applying the criteria resulted in 81 percent of respondents being identified as homeless.

Identifying Households With and Without Children

HUD defines “households with children” as a household with children under the age of 18. Although evidence of children in a household was not always consistently documented in any given survey, in general, if there was solid evidence that the respondent had any children under 18 years of age, CEPA/CPPSC identified the household as being a household with children. They directed particular diligence and thoroughness at this specific issue, as it is important to recognize the extent of homelessness among families with children.

The primary means of identifying households with children was the respondent indicating that s/he was “a single parent with children under 18” or “part of a couple with children under 18” (Q8). By definition, this response identified a household as having children, regardless of whether or not there was additional information in Q9, Q10 or Q11. In other words, if respondents reported in Q8 that they had children, they were counted as having children even if they did not document these children elsewhere in the survey (since respondents often left questions blank).⁶¹

- CEPA/CPPSC defined the response to Q8 as a primary threshold for several reasons. The question clearly asks respondents to describe their living situation, and offers options for single persons and couples who are living with and without children under 18. The question comes early in the survey and, while some respondents had trouble identifying as “a single person” when they were homeless with siblings, parents or friends, the presence or absence of children is straightforward. Second, the great majority of respondents answered this question. Third, many respondents did not answer Q9, and a number of those who answered Q9 did not complete the information describing the age and relationship of family members that was requested in Q10 and Q11. Therefore, responses to Q8 are considered to be more reliable than responses (or non-responses) to Q9, Q10 and Q11.

Households meeting other criteria also were identified as being “households with children.” Persons whose survey responses indicated that they were grandparents with their grandchildren were classified as “households with children.” Respondents were identified as “grandparents with grandchildren” if they were staying with their grandchildren and (1) not staying with family or friends and (2) the children’s parents were not living with the family.

- In addition, if a respondent said that he or she was “a single person” in Q8, but listed someone under age 18 in Q10, and said that it was his/her child in Q11, researchers assumed that the detailed response was the correct one. Likewise, if a respondent said

⁶¹ Survey Q9 asked: “How many family members are/with you on Monday night, January 29th, who also are without a permanent place to live?” If the respondent did not indicate that there were any family members with him/her on Monday night, it was assumed that the respondent correctly described him/herself as being part of a household with children in Q8. Similarly, if respondent did not complete the table indicating the ages of other family members by giving the age(s) of their child/children (Q10) or even by indicating that there were children with them on the previous night (Q11), researchers assumed that the information in Q8 correctly identified the household as having children under 18.

that he or she was “part of a couple without children under 18” but listed someone under age 18 in Q10 and said that is was his/her child in Q11, it was assumed that the detailed response was correct. Given that some respondents gave inconsistent information, the decision was made that detailed information in the table describing family members superseded the less detailed information in Q8.

Finally, respondents who said that they lived in “other” situations in Q8 were classified as having children if they met one of the following conditions:

- They said they were pregnant.
- They said they were divorced and reported a child/children under 18 years old who was with them on Monday night.
- They said they were separated because of domestic violence and reported a child/children under 18 years old who was with them on Monday night.

“Households without children” are primarily identified by respondents reporting they are “a single person” in Q8, indicating that they were with no other family members with them in Q9, and not indicating any children under 18 in Q10 and Q11. They also were classified as being a “household without children” if they said they were “single” but reported another person with them in Q9, but did not give ages or relationships in Q10 or Q11.

Respondents who said they were “part of a couple without children under 18” in Q8 and did not indicate that they had children under 18 in Q10 were classified as “households without children.” This was the case if they said there was one other homeless person with them in Q9, but did not give the age or relationship in Q10 or Q11. Since they said they were part of a couple in Q8, it was assumed that the person listed in Q9 was a spouse. Furthermore, even if the spouse was under 18, the household was categorized as a “household without children.”

When respondents gave inconsistent responses, researchers looked at their answers to all relevant questions and made a determination of household status (with or without children) to the best of their ability. If someone gave inconsistent responses to Q8 and Q9, i.e., that they were “a single person” in Q8 but indicated that there were other homeless relatives with them on Monday night in Q9, researchers looked at the ages of their family members in Q11. If all ages were 18 or older, the household was classified as a “household without children.” If they listed children under 18 and were not staying with family or friends, they were classified as a “household with children.”

There were households where the research consultants were unable to determine if there were children under 18. This was the case for households where the respondent said he or she was “a single person” in Q8, said that there were other homeless family members in Q9, said that one or more of these family members was a child, but did not identify the ages of the other family members.

Counting Number of Homeless Persons in Households

There were two ways to calculate the number of relatives who were with the respondent and without a permanent place to live.

- The first was by using the number reported in Q9: “Not including yourself, how many relatives were with you last night?”
- The second was by counting the number of other family members listed in Q10, age of other family members, and/or Q11, relationship to respondent of other family members.

These two methods produced inconsistent results in a number of cases. The most typical situation was when a respondent reported a higher number of family members in Q9 than s/he had reported in Q10 and/or Q11. Some respondents did not complete the table asking for age and relationship of other family members. Therefore, the general rule was that if the number listed in Q9 was greater than the total number of persons listed in Q10 and/or Q11, the researchers took the larger number in Q9. This is because it was likely that Q9 was correct, and the respondent simply neglected to enter the description of family members in Q10 and Q11.

Less frequently, when the number of persons in Q9 was less than the total number listed in Q10 and/or Q11, researchers used the larger number in Q10/Q11. In this case, it was assumed that if someone gave details about who they spent the previous night with, those persons actually existed, and therefore should be counted. Respondents may have forgotten someone when answering Q9, or may have added up the number of people they were with incorrectly, but then listed everyone in the table.

There were several exceptions to the general rules described above. If the respondent spent the previous night in one of the following situations (Q13), CEPA/CPPSC researchers looked at all relevant questions and made a determination as to whether or not we could legitimately count the other persons listed in Q9, Q10, and/or Q11:

- Stayed with family or friends;
- Was on the street, under a bridge, abandoned building, public building, car, traveling on a bus, camping out, etc.; or
- Was in a youth shelter.

These exceptions were made because, when someone spent the night in one of the above situations, researchers could not immediately conclude that everyone the respondent listed was homeless. It is possible that the respondent listed family members in whose home s/he was staying who were not homeless. Persons living on the street could list friends who they “lived with” on the street, and youth living in a youth shelter could list other youth they were staying with who were not family members. Researchers were very careful to consider these possibilities and to avoid overestimating the number of homeless persons. For example, if someone said they were staying with family or friends and reported that they were single in Q8, researchers assumed that the relatives they were staying with were not homeless. This eliminated 202 potentially homeless family members. For persons living on the street or staying in a youth shelter, other persons were eliminated if there was no evidence that they were a respondent’s family member.

Since more than one-fifth of homeless respondents reported that they spent the previous night with friends or family, this was a major confounding factor in assessing the homelessness of other household members. For this group, the researchers had to make the critical determination of how many, if any, of the other persons listed actually were homeless with the

respondents, versus how many regularly lived in the house or apartment where the respondent spent the night. This latter group clearly could not be counted as homeless. The problem partly stems from how questions 9, 10, and 11 were asked. Q8 asked, “Not including yourself, how many relatives were with you last night?” Similarly, Q10-Q11 asked, “Please complete this table for all the relatives who were with you last night etc.” Unfortunately, neither question explicitly stated that the relatives had to be homeless. Therefore, for respondents who spent the night with family or friends who listed other relatives, the research consultants carefully reviewed the information on family situation (Q8) and for other relatives and made our best determination about whether or not persons listed in Q9, Q10 and/or Q11 actually were homeless with the respondent.

When respondents indicated they were with friends rather than family members, the data on friends were eliminated. Some respondents reported staying with either family or friends; the researchers were diligent in their effort to determine whether the respondents were reporting family members they were living with who were not homeless. When this occurred, only the children and/or spouse of the respondent, depending on the household composition, were counted. Persons who were determined not to be homeless were not included in the descriptions of the ages and family relationships of all homeless persons.

Final Database

Table 29 describes the number of surveys that were collected, entered, and removed from the final database.

Table 29. Survey Collection and Final Database	
Surveys collected/entered	8,377
Case removed/no data	1
Duplicates removed	134
Not homeless removed	1,577
Final number in database	6,665

LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

Difficulty Counting the Homeless

A point-in-time survey can “miss” many people, because they are not in places where they can be found, much less where they have the opportunity to complete a survey, such as those living in automobiles, or other kinds of crude and temporary housing. A study of formerly homeless people reported that the most common places where persons difficult to count were staying were in vehicles, tents, boxes, caves, or boxcars.⁶² There were many remote areas across Colorado that volunteers simply could not access, and places where it was not safe for staff or volunteers to go. Many agency staff are overworked and might not have been able to get to everyone they were currently serving. In addition, when people are approached to complete a survey, some refuse. There is a more detailed discussion of these problems in the Summary, “Surveys Typically Undercount the Homeless” (p. 98.)

⁶² NCH Fact Sheet #2,” see footnote 5.

Accuracy of “Not Homeless”

Almost one in five (18.8%) surveys were removed from the database as “Not Homeless” based on established criteria. Other than living in permanent supportive housing, the primary reason for removing these surveys was that the respondent reported spending Monday night in his or her apartment or home, or staying with family or friends. Many of these surveys were removed even though some (but not enough) of the respondents’ answers to other questions pointed to homelessness. Service providers have contended that individuals often report staying in their apartment or home because they are in denial of the precarious nature of their situation or because they simply will not admit to their homelessness. This limitation of the data addresses the probability of eliminating people from the study who actually may be homeless.

Self-Reported Data

Survey respondents commonly underreport sensitive and personal information, for example, the existence of serious “conditions” such as HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and/or serious mental illness. As questions become more sensitive and ask about stigmatizing and potentially embarrassing or self-incriminating behaviors, they are probably subject to increasing bias.

The limitation that self-reported data place on the study is applicable to homeless immigrant and undocumented individuals and families in Colorado. The study specifically asked if the respondent was a seasonal or year-round farm worker and if they spent Monday night in a farm labor camp or dorm. It is unlikely that many homeless people in this category felt comfortable enough to answer this question, or even to complete a survey, because of the current political climate around issues of immigration and the undocumented.⁶³

It is impossible to capture the true nature of the daily challenges facing the people completing the survey. This limitation of the data addresses the probability that for some respondents, the survey did not capture the true nature of their situation; others were simply not counted.

Family Members Not Fully Identified in Survey

A number of respondents who identified themselves as having children or a spouse did not document those family members when completing their survey. The following table describes respondents’ household situation and the 497 respondents that did not include information about their family members on the survey.

Table 30. Family Members Not Counted	# of Surveys
Single parent with children	268
Part of a couple with children under 18	96
Part of a couple without children under 18	133

As a result, a number of family members, and especially children, who also were homeless were not described in the survey data. An estimated number of homeless family members of the 497 respondents is part of the Total Homeless for Statewide, the Continuums of Care, and each Region.

⁶³ Agency staff and advocates from various regions in Colorado described the challenges and difficulties that immigrant populations face.

Domestic Violence

The research team developed a method for gathering data and determining the number of homeless individuals served by domestic violence agencies for the August 2006 Colorado homeless count. Domestic violence agency staff used a version of the survey that omitted personal information fields that domestic violence experts felt might put respondents at risk. Agency staff were asked to complete a spreadsheet documenting, in aggregate form, the demographics of clients served on the night of January 28. Spreadsheets were sent to the Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence, where they were compiled and organized by region. These aggregate data were submitted to researchers at CEPA/CPPSC.

DEBRIEFING

The Housing Subcommittee met the day after the count to hear feedback regarding the day of the count process. A web-based debriefing survey was sent to participating agencies, volunteers, and county and regional coordinators to provide an easy avenue for comment and feedback. The debriefing survey elicited input on the clarity of the survey instrument and tracking forms, the usefulness of training materials, the ease of conducting the count, the numbers of volunteers and hours required for the survey process, strategies that worked and did not work, as well as suggestions for improvement. On a separate day, the Housing Subcommittee listened to stories about the “faces of homelessness” that illustrated issues, conditions and experiences of homeless people. (See Appendix 10 for Debriefing Report).